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THE

VILLAGE PASTOR

AND

HIS CHILDREN.

THE

VILLAGE PASTOR

AND

HIS CHILDREN.

A NOVEL.

FOUR VOLUMES IN TWO.

from the german of

AUGUSTUS LA FONTAINE.

"Erudition will be acquired, and its fund augmented; the human mind "may continue its progress towards perfection; taste may change; but so "long as there are good and susceptible hearts, they will be moved on read-"ing my work: there will always be fathers, children, spouses; and as I "write their sentiments from the feelings of my soul, I am sure of always "finding readers."

VILLAGE PASTOR, vol. i. p. 68.

VOL II.

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THE

VILLAGE PASTOR.

CHAP. I.

The evening of st. Sylvester.

A GLOOM of melancholy now overspread our house. Elizabeth, who was expected to restore us to cheerfulness, was the person who stood in most need of it. It was st. Sylvester's day. Charles being alone with his two sisters, cried, jesting—'one should separate from an enemy with more pleasure than we have in taking leave of this year.'

'Ah! this year,' exclaimed Elizabeth, sighing, 'this unfortunate year!'

'Do you not think, sisters,' continued he, 'that there should be two days in every year, when, in spite of fate, we should strive to make merry, and be happy? I would propose for that purpose the first and last of the year: one should forget on those days all misfortunes,'

'Forget!' sighed Mina.

'It is true, said Charles, continuing to philosophize, 'that man is very much inclined to the spirit of contra-

diction; it suffices that he be ordered to be joyful, for him to lose the desire of being so. We have all an unhappy look to-day, merely I believe because our father has pitched upon this day for us to be gay. We do not like our days of joy to be marked out for us.'

'Ah, joy!' cried Elizabeth, putting her hand to her heart; 'if you but knew, Charles, how sorrowfully this day of joy will terminate for me!'

'This day!' said Mina, 'what is one day, only one sorrowful day, when all those that are to follow will be days of happiness? you weep, Elizabeth! oh! if you thought that to-day perhaps there are in the world hearts torn by a much more serious grief, and which smile, notwithstanding——come, courage, my sister! —my opinion is that we should embrace our good parents this evening with gaiety: for my part, I intend to do it, and certainly will. I wish that my last month may terminate with serenity.'

Neither Elizabeth nor Charles perceived the double meaning of these words; they thought she was speaking of the last month of the year, and the poor creature meant the last month of her life!

In the evening as we sat at table, I reminded my wife of all the moments of joy and happiness we had had during our life; but I saw in every countenance the prognostics of our future misfortunes.

'Do not speak of that,' said my wife; 'we only become the more dejected: another day you can make us the enumeration of our happiness.'

'And who knows,' replied I, 'if I shall not have some instances to add to it? he who in his bounty has dispensed us some on the preceding years, can he not give us some this year too?'

Elizabeth came and embraced me.

'He will give you, dear father, many happy moments!'

Her agitation in pronouncing these words was extreme. She went to the window, opened it, and remained there an instant. Soon after Salzman entered the room; she went to meet him, took him by the hand, and dropping on her knees before me—'here,' said she, 'is a happiness for every year of your life! behold a son, an excellent son, whom your Elizabeth gives you! father, bless your children, bless the spouse of your daughter!'

Salzman knelt also. My heart palpitated with the most delicious joy; I extended my paternal hand to bless them, when a cry from Charles made me turn my head toward him. His sister Mina was lifeless in his arms, her head hanging on her bosom, and the paleness of death on her face. We all flew to her assistance. When she came to herself a little, she attempted to smile upon us; but grief seemed to withhold it—it only glanced on her lips.

'To bed,' breathed she faintly.

Her brother and I carried her up; her pulse beat very quick, and her bosom was oppressed. Elizabeth, melting into tears, minded nothing but her, thought of nothing but her, and declared she would sit up with her that night. We wished all to stay, but Mina would only keep her sister and mother.

Salzman retired at eleven o'clock. Some time after I was sent away likewise. I entered my chamber with a distracted heart; I went to the window, laid my forehead to the frozen glass, and remained lost in the abyss of my reflections. The clock struck midnight; the expiring year detached itself from time. I counted despondently the strokes; the last seemed to me to be the expiring sigh of my poor daughter. I threw myself on my knees and commenced the new year bathed in tears, broken-hearted, hopeless, and hardly able to proffer up my prayers.

CHAP. II.

The first day of the year.

Misfortune is always hard to support; but it is doubly so when it happens on a day marked for joy, or which makes an epoch in life, such as new-year's day. Man is apt in such a case to arrogate to himself the right of reproaching fate with the vexation which weighs upon him, and seems then much more heavy. On Sundays and festivals even the negro slave has some relaxation: should fate be more pitiless than the driver of slaves? it should on such days dry up all tears, heal all wounds, console all hearts, that the new year might be welcomed with joy and gratitude: but, alas! it is otherwise, far otherwise! poor, poor mankind! a new year is but too often a new misfortune!

On the morning of the new year's day the weather was clear and serene, and my heart was crushed with a weight of calamity. I lifted my eyes to the heavens—not a cloud was to be seen; the ice and snow reflecting the light of a frigid sun, sparkled like an expanse of diamonds: and my heart, glowing with paternal love, was filled with inquietudes and fears, and wrapped up in gloomy sadness.

My wife entered my room, she trod softly, as if she was fearful of awakening my grief; and every thing proved how much she was penetrated with it: her pale countenance, her trembling lips, the doubtful and dejected air with which she accosted me, without wishing me a happy year as usual, and her disconsolate look, which bade me not wish it her neither, because it would be useless.

'Thou wishest nothing, dear Augusta,' said I to her, 'because thou hopest nothing.'

'God grant us patience!' cried she in a low voice, and clasping her hands: 'behold my only wish!'

'And fortitude!' added I.

'Patience only, dear friend; how have fortitude? Mina is ill, very ill; but that is not all: there is something in it which I do not comprehend. Elizabeth also is unwell; she is almost as much indisposed as Mina.'

'I will go see them,' cried I with emotion: and I was going, till my wife stopped me.

'No,' said she, 'do not see them at present! think that thou art to attend church and preach to-day.'

'It is on that very account I wish to see them first. Could I preach a word, a single word, without having seen my children?'

I therefore went into the chamber where they were. Mina was slumbering, but appeared to be in the agitation of a violent fever. Elizabeth was setting beside the bed, pale as death, and holding one of Mina's hands: her eyes were fixed upon her sister; she did not even see me enter. My four other children, who had followed me, remained at some distance, stifling their sobs, and looking at their darling sister with eyes bedimmed with tears. This moving spectacle of woe rent my very soul; I was unable to bear it. I returned to my chamber, and endeavored to prepare myself for my sermon. God of consolation! I was to preach fortitude to my parishioners, and could find nothing in myself but dejection and tears! I was going to exhort to resignation, and myself was on the point of murmuring!

What might console my country-folks, was without effect upon my own distracted heart. The hail had com-

mitted great ravages in our canton the preceding summer; I myself had suffered considerably; and my sermon was composed for the occasion.

It was absolutely necessary to acquire a fictitious courage, since I could not find any in myself. I looked at the serene sky, and the sun shedding the glories of light and my only thought was of the sick, who saw them not, or the wretched, who saw them with pain. I heard the plaints of the suffering, shut up within their curtains, and deprived of his influence; I beheld eyes full of tears, wounded by the lustre of his rays. 'It is then only the happy,' said I to myself with anguish, 'who enjoy the pleasure of a fine day!'

I exalted my imagination beyond the sun, and to the utmost limits of creation; I carried it to the foot of the eternal throne of the Almighty, without being able to succeed in calming my afflicted heart. Upon the wings of thought I traversed the past, the future, the tranquillity of the tomb, the triumphant death of misfortune, the eternity after death; and my heart was not consoled. The bell was ringing? I went out to go to the church.

'There is no danger, none at all,' said the schoolmaster, with the air of a physician, to my wife, who was speaking to him upon the stairs; 'be composed, I know the fever as well as the alphabet. Too much blood, palpitations, faintings, are there not? there is no danger,—do not be uneasy: in three days she will be well, or I am not an honest man.'

'What delightful words! neighbor assures me the illness is not dangerous,' said my wife to me, rejoicing: 'is it not so friend?'

'No, not in the least,' repeated the old man: and he recounted successively a dozen of similar examples, which did me more good than all my sublime reflections; and I went to church with my heart buoyed up by hope; but I destroyed it all by my sermon.

'It is an error which man is continually guilty of,' said I to them, 'when a misfortune befals, him to think it the greatest of all others; while he should, on the contrary, think on the many much more grievous misfortunes which he is spared. You, my friends, for instance, whose fields have been laid waste by the hail, if one of your beloved children had been stretched upon its death-bed, your lamentations could not have been more bitter, your tears more abundant, and your murmurs against providence more loud and repeated, than on the day your harvest was lost; and yet what a difference! another summer may repair this loss, and fill your graneries; but what can restore to a mother the child she has lost? another child? ah, do not believe it! the child laid in the grave always appears unequalled.

'Why will man not proportion his grief to his losses? do not lavish your tears for indifferent evils: tears are the effusion of the heart; do not shed them for ills which touch it not. The frail that fell takes nothing from the present moment: it is then more through fear than affliction that your tears have flowed on this occasion. Reserve them, my friends, for the only real misfortune in this world, the only one irreparable—the death of those we love. Then is affliction just—it is natural, it is useful.'

In pronouncing these words I had before my eyes our Mina wrapped in her winding-sheet, and laid in the coffin: I thought I already saw her myrtle garland suspended on the walls of the church: and the tears stifled my voice. I was forced to interrupt my sermon for some instants, and it was with difficulty I was able to conclude. My prayer and benediction were fervent, they flowed from the heart of a father; and when I returned home, I was drowned in tears. As I crossed the stairs I heard old Mary saying to my youngest daughter—'do not weep, Annette! what one does the first day of the year, one always does every other day in the year, too.'

Will it be believed, those words were before my thoughts

all day long! at dinner I conjured my wife and children to strive to smile even once, since it was impossible for them to be cheerful. If misfortune augment faith, it is also the source of superstition: the distracted soul which finds no consolation here below, seeks it in the other world, and often dwells upon words uttered by chance, observes the flight of birds, watches the fall of a little stone, and making so many oracles of them, demands miracles of providence to confirm them.

After dinner, a physician whom we had sent for arrived. Ah! how much a man may become more than a man! this man appeared to us an angel, because he gave us hopes. May heaven, for his recompence, inspire him with hope every day of his life! he passed the whole night beside his patient, along with Elizabeth; and on going away in the morning, promised to return. He kept his word; and his attentions had the wished-for success.

The expresses to town, the remedies, the physician's fees, consumed the little money we had left; it became necessary to sell our last piece of plate.

Mina's danger was over, and we could at present reflect upon the mysterious cause of her illness; but we could not conjecture it, for her serenity returned with her strength; and she even succeeded in weakening the suspicions entertained by Elizabeth, who, without telling us, had at last guessed the truth; but she began to think that she had mistaken, and did not wish to speak of it lest she should cause any uneasiness to the dear convalescent.

Alas! Mina loved Salzman still with the same passion! but she concealed it with more resolution than before. The sacrifice was made—the most painful moment was past: she had seen her sister betrothed to Salzman; and the return of her health appeared to her a proof of the strength of her moral powers. But she was deceived: it was, on the contrary, her physical powers that actually gave her heart the strength to bury a hopeless pas-

sion under a feigned tranquillity; and to watch carefully, and prevent every thing that might betray it: yet Elizabeth was, notwithstanding, very near guessing it.

When Mina's health was almost re-established, her sister took the first occasion to penetrate into her mind: she told her one day, sighing—

'Since st. Sylvester's evening, my heart has not had an instant of repose: I feel that I am perjured with respect to Wahlen—and I shall feel it all my life! ah, Mina! the mere possibility that I may not marry Salzman, renders my heart as contented, as light, as if life and its sorrows were far removed from me!'

Mina turned her head aside to conceal the blush that overspread her still pallid cheek, and said, gently—

'And yet, Eliza, you love Salzman—you love him more than you think.'

'Yes, I love him like a brother,' answered Elizabeth: 'he is a worthy excellent man. Oh, how happy had I been if the confidence he shows for you——'

'What! what confidence?' interrupted Mina: 'he only showed it me, because I used to speak to him of you.'

'If that confidence,' resumed Elizabeth, 'had changed into love——'

This was the moment to read in the countenance the heart of Mina; but, instead of looking attentively at her—instead of observing her confusion, her blushing, and the palpitation of her heart, the innocent Elizabeth, from a more delicate sentiment, looked down and saw nothing. Mina then had time to collect herself, and replied with calmness—

'Yes, doubtless; but it is much better, Eliza, he loves you, and you love him. Oh most surely!'

'Ah! if you had become his wife!' cried Elizabeth, again lowering her voice.

Mina, perceiving then by her sister's embarrassed air, that she only wanted to discover her secret, took courage, and said to her gaily—

'Ha, ha! miss! you must have a baron, and want me to content myself with a farmer! but indeed it shall not be so: you say yourself that I am better adapted for high life than you. Do you marry your Salzman: then who knows what Wahlen may do?'

At this Elizabeth looked up, and saw Mina smile so naturally, that all her suspicions were dissipated.

Tranquillity was then returned among us? alas! no! there reigned in my family a sort of constraint and mutual distrust. It was like the first moments after a violent storm: it was over; we trembled no longer; but we still beheld, in silent awe, the black clouds that bounded the horizon. Elizabeth was amicable toward Salzman, without any thing like love or confidence. Mina appeared calm, but had frequent returns of a settled grief, which she struggled to conceal under an assumed gaiety. My wife and I were harrassed with anxiety.

My wife had reason to say that Elizabeth was more unwell than Mina. When she solemnly plighted herself to Salzman on st. Sylvester's evening, she felt, in all its extent, how much the sacrifice she had imposed upon herself was great and difficult; however, from that moment she considered herself the spouse of Salzman; and even to think of Wahlen, appeared to her a crime. Her secret reproaches undermined her strength; but she locked them in her heart, and concealed from us the grief which was consuming her under a melancholly smile.

CHAP. III.

Love and youth.

Why will people call folly, that sentiment of a young heart, which gives it the strength to live in misery—in a desert—in a cavern, provided it be with the beloved object—and even to follow it to the tomb?—change a single word, let it be a wife, a husband, and you admire it.—But is not courage always courage?—are not sacrifices always sacrifices, even were their object only an illusion? the sacrifices which man makes unceasingly to gold, to glory, to ambition—are such more real, more meritorious?—and though it be true that youth go astray, yet do we not go astray—we who blame it?—was Mutius less a hero, because his hand mistook and killed the secretary instead of the king?—no; leave youth its noble enthusiasm of sensibility; instead of stifling it by your raileries, direct it toward the good, the beautiful and the true—instead of degrading it to trifles, elevate it to God, to virtue, to eternity. The vexations and crimes of this life, slighted love, and betrayed friendship, will but too soon cool the glowing heart; the time will come, but too soon, when reason and experience diffuse their freezing breath upon every object, and man believes no longer in the existence of happiness upon this earth. Let the brilliant light of youthful illusion cheer the sad and gloomy future with some of its colored rays. Are the hopes and wishes of old men for another life, different from the chimeras of a young man for this?—is not the pure love of youth an emblematic emanation of the eternal love?—and is what the most sensible man desires at the bottom of his heart, in every moment of his life, in the bosom of happiness,

under the weight of adversity, other than the realization of the dreams of his youth?

We were one day assembled, and Salzman with us; Elizabeth was called out: in about ten minutes after, she rushed into the room, pale and trembling.

'He is there!' cried she, with the most piteous accent.

'Who?' demanded we altogether; and Mina took her sister in her arms.

She did not answer at first; but we all guessed who it was; and Salzman turned as pale as Elizabeth.

'It is Wahlen,' said she at last, 'and he wants to speak to me.'

'What does he want?—what! he dares to come here—to pursue you under the very eyes of a father!—it is I that will speak to him.'

I was going out; but Elizabeth threw herself before me, crying—

'Oh father! read this!—he does not pursue me: read—he is better than I:' and she gave me a billet.

Salzman had risen; and with an air of the greatest consternation, took his hat. Charles snatched it out of his hands, saying—

'I think my dear Salzman, you should stay: should he not dear father? he must stay.'

'My presence,' cried he, with a hollow and sorrowful voice, 'might give Elizabeth pain. Permit me to——'

'No, no,' interrupted she, advancing to him, and taking him by the hand—'no, Salzman, I beg you to stay: it is only the first moment of surprise that has overcome me. I shall not speak to him; I will not see him, if you and my parents disapprove of it. You must stay—I am—I shall be composed.'

I kept silence; and Salzman persisted in wishing to go away.

'My presence,' said he again, 'would embarrass you all; and that I may not lose your confidence, I would rather go.'

'It is precisely for that reason you must stay,' cried my son: 'if your presence could embarrass us, we would not deserve your friendship. Oh my father! Salzman must stay—he must be a witness of what is to be done! have you not said a hundred times that, without frankness and confidence, love and friendship could not exist?'

I had said it that very day, but without giving it such an extension: however, I felt also that Salzman ought to remain, in order to have no doubt of our sincerity. I entreated him and he yielded, but with unwillingness.

I still held Wahlen's billet, without reading it.

'What does he write?' asked my son.

'Read!' cried Elizabeth.

Mina sat down in a corner, with a singular air: she wished to have an appearance of indifference, but the vivacity of her looks, and her frequent changing of color, betrayed, in spite of her, the part she took in it.

'Elizabeth, dear Elizabeth,' said Charles, 'I conjure thee, be sincere! what does all this mean?—why does Whalen write to thee?—why is he here?'

Elizabeth sat down, and sighed profoundly; then she told us that she had loved Wahlen very much; and took a letter out of her bosom, it was that the reader knows already, which was a copy of one she had returned him, and read it with a tone that evinced how much her heart was still affected.

'I have sent him back this letter,' said she trembling, as he himself desired, without adding a single word: since then I have neither seen him, nor received any thing.

from him. Alas! I hoped he had forgot me—that he was happy—and I was tranquil!—to-day he sends me this billet by a little boy from the village: read it, father!'

I opened it, and read—

'I am within twenty paces of you, dear Elizabeth. I come not to trouble your happiness, nor to make you any reproach; no, I only wish to see you again for an instant, and to receive a last adieu from your lips. Oh! once, only once, more let your eyes and your smile repose on me—let me receive your farewell, and hear you say—'I am happy!'—and I will go!—but, Elizabeth, if even that be denied you, write at least the word '*farewell!*' under my name, and send me this billet. Those dear characters—that word, traced by the hand of Elizabeth, will be a consolation to the unhappy man from whom fate has ravished every thing.

'WAHLEN.'

While I was reading, and even after I had done, a profound silence reigned among us: it was only interrupted by Mina's sobs, and the sighs of Elizabeth. Salzman's eyes were cast down.

'Elizabeth,' cried I, after a pause of some moments, 'you may write '*farewell!*' at the bottom of this billet.'

'Father,' exclaimed Charles, 'why do so?—M. von Wahlen merits an explanation.'

'He merits nothing,' replied I: 'has he not, unknown to us, inveigled your sister into an imprudent attachment?'

'Inveigled!—no, father; according to what my sisters have told us, he has not inveigled her. My advice is, that Elizabeth should speak to him.'

'He is a man who knows all the recesses of the human heart,' replied I, with harshness; 'Elizabeth is only a simple country girl. Yes, it is he—it is he alone who has inveigled her!'

'He is a man, father, who appears upright and candid, according to the letters we have seen from him—according to what Elizabeth has told us—and according to all his conduct.'

'And according to his coming here!' added I, sneeringly.

'I do not pretend to say that he is a man superior to all the weaknesses of humanity,' replied my son, with vivacity. 'I do not know this passion of love, father; but, according to what you have said of it yourself, this conduct of Wahlen appears magnanimous and natural: he is possessed of honor, but he loves. Father, an honest and worthy man, whose only fault is loving your daughter, deserves an explanation. Let him speak to Elizabeth!'

'And what can he say to her?' resumed I more mildly.

'What a man should always say—the truth.

Perhaps my son was right; but I knew love better than he, and I dreaded this interview.

'No,' said I, with firmness, 'it is better that none of us should speak to him; but that you or I write to him politely, that Elizabeth is engaged. If he be a man he will bear it;—if, as you say, he has the weaknesses of human nature, we have our share too and it is for that reason we must not see him: is it not so my good Elizabeth?—that is much better.' She bowed her head in sign of consent. 'I will write to him,' continued I, 'and Charles will carry my letter; so M. von Whalen will see that we respect and pity him.'

The moment I opened the door to go into my chamber, M. von Wahlen himself appeared before me. Notwithstanding my resentment, his countenance seemed so

sad and timid, the sound of his voice so trembling, that I was disarmed, and saluted him with politeness: however, I stood in the entrance, uncertain if I would let him in; but Elizabeth perceived him. She rose up suddenly, made some steps towards the door, and stretched out her arms toward him: it was an involuntary movement; she checked herself in the very act, and covered her face with her two hands. Wahlen instantly advanced, and darted by me into the room; but before he approached her, he said to me, in a respectful manner—

'Pardon me, Mr. Pastor: I suppose that you know—'

'Yes, M. von Wahlen,' interrupted I, with dignity, 'I know, unfortunately, that you have abused the hospitality you received under my humble roof—I know that you have seduced the defenceless heart of an innocent young girl, and that you have destroyed the content we enjoyed in our poverty. Ah, sir! if you had been just and good, you would have considered that serenity and mutual confidence could only indemnify us for the mediocrity of our situation; and that, by troubling the heart of our child, you disturbed the peace of all her family. Our happiness consists in remaining what we are; a grander prospect would even be a load that would render us unhappy. We have at last recovered our union and tranquillity; let us enjoy it!'

When I began my discourse, he cast down his eyes; but according as I spoke, he gradually raised them up, and at the end looked at me with a noble loftiness, as if I had been making his best eulogium.

'If it be true,' replied he to me, 'that you are all happy and tranquil, and Elizabeth also, then I have deceived myself, and my compassion changes its object—it is I alone who am unfortunate—I alone who am to be pitied!'

'My lord,' said I, raising my voice, 'did you then hope to find us all unfortunate?'

'Ah, mr. Pastor!' cried he, with a melting tone, 'you know me very little! yes, I hoped, I acknowledge it, that Elizabeth's heart was not so tranquil as you say; but to restore her to tranquillity and happiness was my design. It is needless, at present, to tell you to what excess I have loved, and still love your daughter!' here his voice faltered, and tears filled his eyes. 'To adore her eternally—to consecrate my life to her, was what I wished—what I hoped. I hope no longer for myself; but in loving me once, Elizabeth has given me a right to watch over her happiness—and to see her happy, is now the sole wish of my heart. But no, no—that is not what I would say: to renounce her cannot be the wish of my heart. I know not how to express myself; but I feel I would give a thousand lives to make her happy; and the pain I endure, were it a thousand times more poignant, would seem inconsiderable, if I could restore her to repose.'

'And have you not reflected, baron, that this visit, far from tending to such an effect, would, on the contrary, disturb it for ever? if you had been as generous as you say——'

'I should not have come?' cried he, interrupting me. 'For pity listen to me, mr. Pastor! I have been absent three months. After having written some letters to Elizabeth, in secret, I was determined not to take the least step without your knowledge. Sure of her heart, I wished to wait until circumstances permitted me to ask you for her hand: at my return, I found my last letter, which Elizabeth had sent back. I have some firmness, no doubt; but then I am no more than a man—and I love. Determined to sacrifice every thing, were it even my life, to the happiness of my Elizabeth—to bless the hand that would render her happy, were it even the hand of a rival, I was desirous, however, of knowing at what price I was sacrificed. As much as I was resolved not to see Elizabeth again, if she herself did not wish it, was I resolved not to suffer her to be disposed of against her will. I have learned at the inn that she had been very ill precisely at the time the letter was returned. My

resolution of seeing her—of speaking to her, acquired new strength; and if she loves me still—if she has been forced to return my letter—if her illness——'

'It was Mina,' interrupted I, 'who fell sick on new-year's eve; and when Elizabeth sent you back your letter, we did not know it.'

Wahlen grew pale; he smothered a profound sigh.

'If it be thus,' cried he, sorrowfully, 'pardon me for having come; certainly I should not have come; then—then—'—he cast upon Elizabeth a doubtful look, and pronounced slowly, 'farewel! Elizabeth, farewel! be happy!'

Elizabeth raised her eyes, bursting with tears, upon him: all her features were contracted. She struggled to speak, but no sound issued from her lips: she waved her hand.

'Have you not a word for me, Elizabeth—not even one adieu!' cried Wahlen, with the tone of anguish.

She lifted her pale face and trembling hands toward heaven.

'Oh my God!' exclaimed she, with an effort. 'Adieu, Wahlen! farewel for ever! I am—I am more unfortunate than you!' and she sunk almost inanimate upon a chair, crying still, 'adieu Wahlen! dear Wahlen, forget me!'

She stretched him her hand, and love, the most tender, the most affectionate love, was pictured in her look. During the expression of this adieu, Wahlen had run to her, fallen at her feet, and pressed his lips to her hand. She leaned upon him; and we all heard them repeat—'dear Elizabeth! dear Wahlen!'

I was beside myself at this scene. 'Elizabeth!' cried I, angrily, to recall her to a sense of herself. I wanted to seize her by the arm, to separate her from Wahlen, but he prevented me: he rose up, and put his arm around

her, while, with the other, he hindered me from approaching.

'One word—one single word, Elizabeth!' cried he, 'dost thou love me?'

She inclined her head upon his breast, and, with a tone that made me shudder, said, pointing to Salzman—

'I am his betrothed wife;' and then hid her face with her hands.

Until that moment Salzman, sitting beside a table with his forehead leaning upon his hand, appeared a stranger to what was going on, and Wahlen had not even perceived him; but at this declaration of Elizabeth, he started up with violence and came over: he took my daughter's hand, and said, in a deep concentrated voice—

'I beg you, Elizabeth, tell the truth: do you love him?'

'Yes,' cried she, 'I love him, and——'

Salzman did not suffer her to say any more; he let her hand go instantaneously. The paleness of his cheeks and lips, the wildness of his eyes, the contraction of all his muscles, made us tremble; and proved but too well the conflict he underwent. But this state only lasted a few seconds: he sighed deeply, took Elizabeth's hand more gently, seized also the hand of Wahlen, joined them together, and went precipitately out of the room.

All this was done so quick, and we were all so thunderstruck, that none of us could articulate a word; but it was impossible to mistake Salzman's action. My wife looked at me with embarrassment: it was easy to see by her countenance, that this catastrophe gave her no pain; her daughter's love for Wahlen had always appeared to her an obstacle against marrying another.

'You see,' said I to my son, who, with his two arms crossed upon his breast, was observing in silence, 'I did not wish she should speak to him; I did not wish her to see him.'

'But' replied he, with an air of satisfaction, 'is it not better to know the reality?'

'So, behold all our hopes of happiness destroyed!' cried I, passing to the side where Mina stood.

She threw herself on my neck, and exclaimed, with the expression of the liveliest joy—'oh dear father! dear father!'

The color of the rose glowed in her cheeks, and a ray of celestial joy sparkled in her eyes.

In the meanwhile Elizabeth and Wahlen, with their hands still clasped as Salamon had placed them, were speaking to one another in a low voice; and their looks declared that nothing in the world should separate them.

I alone was in a state of despair; all my plans of domestic happiness, all my hopes were destroyed, and I tormented myself with gloomy prospects.

Wahlen at last approached me, knelt at my feet, and took my hand, calling me in the most respectful manner by the endearing name of father.

'That is all very fine,' said I, rather awkwardly: but what remains to be done? no, baron, I will never consent to an union, the consequences of which must be your and my daughter's misfortune.'

'My misfortune!' exclaimed Elizabeth. 'Oh my father! consent to the happiness of your child!' and she threw herself on her knees beside Wahlen.

'No, no,' cried I, 'it is impossible!'

'Come, Charles,' cried Mina, 'on our knees too!' and they both knelt at once behind Elizabeth.

'Dear papa,' cried Mina, 'make our poor Elizabeth

happy! say yes, papa—a kind yes! and you will bring back peace and joy among us, of which we have been deprived so long.'

I began to waver.

'Augusta,' said I to my wife, 'what dost thou say?'

'That she loves him, replied she, with a sweet smile, 'and that one can only love one's husband so.'

Charles never took his eyes off the two lovers: it was easy to see how much such a novel spectacle interested him.

'Rise!' said I at last; 'we shall see.'

They rose up, embraced me all, and this scene terminated in universal content.

CHAP. IV.

Examination and wedding.

We all sat down. Before engaging myself, I said to them—'I wish to know what I have to rely upon.' And I questioned M. von Wahlen, who informed me that he was of age, and absolutely his own master—that his dependance on his uncle was merely voluntary, and from the hope of inheriting his fortune. He avowed to us frankly that this uncle would never consent to his

marriage, and would disinherit him if he contracted it without his knowledge.

I made him a very long and pathetic discourse upon his duty, which obliged him not to reject such a fine fortune; but for answer he took Elizabeth in his arms, and asked me, in a transport of enthusiasm—'would you give your daughter for a million?'

'Not for all the treasures of the earth,' replied I.

'Well, then,' said he, smiling, 'you refute yourself! you would not give her up for millions, you who have five other children whom you love not less, and a wife whom you love perhaps more; and I, who love only Elizabeth, should I give her up for a handful of gold? my father, you surely are not serious!'

Elizabeth looked at him with eyes teeming with love and acknowledgment.

'Ah!' exclaimed she, 'how much one's value augments when one loves!'

'And when one is loved!' said Mina, sadly.

'And your own fortune, Wahlen,' said I to him—'in what does it consist?'

'In a little estate which produces about two hundred and fifty crowns a year, the only remains of a brilliant fortune which my father lost through the vengeance of powerful enemies and too much generosity. I must tell you all. On that estate there lives an old domestic of my father's, a good old man, whose fidelity was not shaken by the greatest misfortunes, and who remained with my father until his death. I have given the produce of the land to this respectable man, and have lived on the bounty of my uncle and a small capital, which is now reduced to a mere trifle. You see I am poor; but if I obtain my Elizabeth, I will think myself the richest man on earth.'

'And your views, your projects—what are they?'

He made a jesture of discouragement.

'I do not know what to answer you with respect to that,

my father, nor what I could undertake. 'My uncle is not only extremely proud, but extremely vindictive; and as he is powerful, he will always throw obstacles in the way of my obtaining such places as might suit me; and my education has not rendered me fit for others.'

'Two hundred and fifty crowns a year,' cried I, shaking my head, 'that is very little!'

'But,' said Mina, 'add to that the million you say Elizabeth is worth.'

'And the old domestic who is in possession of it,' continued I—'what are then your designs, M. Wahlen?'

'Oh! as to that, I can satisfy you!' replied he, with gaiety. 'My designs are, to love Elizabeth with all my soul, and to render her happy. What you may exact from me, and what she herself may desire, I am ignorant of; but I know that two hundred and fifty crowns a year can suffice to the wishes of a moderate man.'

'And what has sufficed for you until now?' said I smiling.

'Three times more; but I spent more than I had occasion to do. And you, dear father—how much answers you?'

'Pretty nearly what you have,' answered I.

'Indeed! you refute yourself again then. The simple manner in which your daughter has been brought up——'

'Are you acquainted with that manner?'

'Am I acquainted with it? until my fifteenth year I led a life with my father, in comparison with which yours is prodigality. He had only a little pension, on which we lived very comfortably; for true comfort lies in knowing how to live with what one has without repining. He inherited that little estate a few months before his death: I then thought myself rich, and it sufficed to all my wish-

ca until my uncle lost his only son. I could perhaps gain a great lawsuit against my uncle; for he had unjustly stripped my father to enrich that son; but I do not wish to go to law with my father's brother. I have another uncle, by my mother's side, who is exceedingly rich and has no heir; but he is a strange man, and hates me merely because I am his sister's child. Thus I have some hopes; but I only rely upon my Elizabeth's love.'

'Yes,' said I, 'love, a poor resource!—a full heart and empty hands!'

'All lovers,' said Mina, 'should have empty hands; they could then embrace each other more readily.'

'A play upon words, Mina!' cried I, angrily. 'Prithee a truce with your follies when we speak of serious affairs.'

'Charles,' said she, with her long dormant vivacity, 'in what book is it we read that in the synods and councils the wisest men have never taken wise resolutions, because they were so solemn and so grave that they never indulged in a pleasantry; and how often are great truths said in jesting! what I have said is no doubt a play upon words; but yet has it not a very true meaning? yes, I repeat it—with full hands they cannot embrace. I am poor: well! I would wish that my lover were still poorer than I; I could then prove my love to him, take care of him, work for him, and be the happiest of women: with our hearts united, under the greatest misfortune I could say to him, smiling, like Arria—'my Pœtus, it does not hurt me'! would I not have reason to say it, father? and might not one say, too, 'full hands and empty heart! oh, how full the heart and soul must be, to support with the man one loves, and for him, hunger, thirst, privations of every kind, and death itself! the rich soon cease to love, because they have nothing to do for one another.'

In one moment this little girl had destroyed all the fine reasonings I intended to deliver.

'And the poor,' said I, 'cease to love, because cares and anxieties do not leave them time.'

'Yes, those who are utterly poor,' replied Elizabeth: 'but, my father, we were poor as we should be to love each other. Was our union ever more tender than when we had almost nothing, and that we read your paternal solicitude in your countenance? was not your attention to our good mother increased, as if to indemnify her for her other privations? had you not more friendship, more confidence for us? ah! how sweet did our morsel of dry bread then taste! yes, father, Mina is right—'empty hands and full heart!'

'If I had a sweetheart,' said Charles, blushing——

'That would suit you perfectly!' interrupted Mina: 'for the language of love, my dear brother, is still more laconic than that of the Lacedemonians, which you admire so much.'

'Well then,' said I to him, 'what would you do if you loved?'

'Suffer for her both thirst and hunger, work with all my strength—dying itself would appear a trifle: but to love, and cede to another her one loves, as Salzman has done to-day, that is what appears great and magnanimous to me.'

Elizabeth looked down, Mina was silent, and Wahlen, for the first time, recollected the young man who had put Elizabeth's hand in his, and inquired after him. Mina immediately recounted with what generosity Salzman had acted. She grew so animated, and wept so much, that she was forced to go out to compose herself. I thanked heaven for it, at length I could speak. My wife did not appear contented; but it was not Wahlen's poverty that gave her uneasiness, it was the continual demonstrations of his love. He was kissing Elizabeth's hands, pressing her in his arms, and sitting quite close to her; and the innocent girl did not repulse him. When Augusta was betrothed, she always kept me in the strict-

est reserve; and it was only by dint of persecution that I had prevailed upon her to suspend the handkerchief from the garret window, although that favor, at the distance of a quarter of a league, was not assuredly very dangerous. The good mother was therefore quite alarmed: she took me out, and said to me—'I beseech thee, dear friend, give thy consent, and give it immediately, that their marriage may not be delayed: God knows what might fall out! I would not have dared even to think, when I was a young girl, of what mine permit themselves to do and say.'

'Well,' cried I, laughing, 'what our children do before us cannot be of any harm.'

'Ah, my friend! upon that point you are a freethinker! that proceeds from your old connection with julia Goldman.'

'No, my Augusta,' cried I, embracing her: 'all that I know, all that I believe of love, it is thyself who hast taught me; thou hast made me feel that true love is the most noble, the most sublime sentiment in nature—that its ties, which are much stronger, and much more sacred than those of friendship, repose equally upon sincerity—and that one must be virtuous, to feel a sincere love—yes, such as I conceive it, it is the basis of all the virtues; and that is the reason I am under no apprehension for our children, because I know their passion is sincere: but I would, I confess, have been as well pleased that Wahlen had not come.'

'I could wish,' replied she, 'that they were married: a stranger would, if he saw them together, think them so a long time.'

Innocent, good woman! she continued to entreat me not to delay too long.

'When I shall have only Mina and my little Annette, I shall know how to keep them,' said she with a confident tone.

I promised to do all that depended on me to tranquillise her; and returned to the room. I saw with plea-

sure that M. Wahlen was not closer to her than he had been in our presence; and I made my wife remark it by a glance. I brought back the conversation to his uncle. Wahlen related to me how that unjust and interested man had ruined his brother to enrich his only son.

'I have yet in my possession,' said he, 'all his papers which prove his bad faith incontestibly: but I do not wish to make more use of them than my father, who would never dishonor so near a relation.'

I questioned him respecting these papers; and it appeared to me, in fact, that his uncle had the strongest reasons to manage him, and could not dare to injure him so long as these proofs against him existed. The capital he was still possessed of, was more considerable than he had given me to understand. His little estate might be improved, especially by cultivating it himself; and that was his intention. The old domestic was a good-natured creature, who loved his young master most heartily, and would content himself with his maintenance along with them until he died.

I begged Wahlen to go and get his little residence ready to settle in immediately after his marriage, which I told him, in secret, should be on the anniversary of my wife's birthday, which was not far off.

'I will get a licence,' said I, 'to announce it but once on the morning of the day of celebration only; but you must promise me to set out to-morrow, and not to return till the wedding-day, or the evening before.'

I exacted that, in order to save my wife from being too much alarmed at the endearments of the young couple.

I invited nobody to the wedding but my wife's brother, who was so busy with his manufactory, that he could not come. Wahlen communicated his marriage to his two uncles by letter, and in such a positive man-

her, that they did not attempt to make the smallest obstacle to it.

My wife's birthday fell on a Sunday. Mina alone was at church: I had hindered Elizabeth from coming, on some specious pretext; but I had not the least doubt her sister would run to inform her of my publishing the banns. However, on returning to the house, I found her very quietly taking out a cloth to lay the table.

I had secretly prepared a wreath of flowers: it was in my closet. I ran to fetch it, and placing it on Elizabeth's head, I presented my daughter to her mother.

'Dear Augusta,' said I to her, 'behold my birthday gift! it is the crown of thy daughter—it is another son. I am going to give thee.'

Elizabeth threw herself into her mother's arms, who pressed her to her heart, and cried—'God bless thee, my child! may all thy days resemble those of thy mother! may they be the days of happiness, confidence, and love—and may thy children, if thou have any, be like unto mine!'

At this Mina, quite surprised, came over from the window where she was standing, and demanded—'what is the meaning of all this? ah, dear sister!' cried she, throwing her arms about Elizabeth's neck, 'I comprehend! you are going to be married.'

'Mina,' said I to her, with surprise, 'where have you been? you went to church; and I announced your sister's nuptials.'

She blushed.

'I remember at present, like a dream,' said she, 'that you have named her: I was so absorbed in my reflections——'

Poor girl! the seat where Salzman used to sit, was opposite her's, and her whole soul had been fixed upon the empty place.

At that moment Wahlen arrived, and flew into the

house to take his trembling, blushing bride to his arms, exclaiming in transport—'mine! for ever mine!'

In a moment the joyful news spread through the house; all my children came running in, crying, and embracing their sister and their new brother, and the happy Elizabeth was surrounded with love and rapture. Old Mary came also to make her felicitations.

'Ha, miss Eliza!' said she to her, 'do you remember the plot of peas? I knew I guessed it; and I will go there by-and-by to offer up my prayer.'

Elizabeth blushed, and Wahlen embraced honest Mary.

This scene was too violent for my feelings. Ah! the joy of a father who marries his child is moderate, and mingled with the sad sentiment of apprehension! in the first tears of a child the father forsees those it will shed during all its life; the crown of matrimony makes him reflect on that of death, and in the garland of roses he numbers all the little thorns; in the midst of his joy he weeps and prays. I went into my bed-chamber; I found my wife on her knees; I prostrated myself beside her, without saying a word.

No, children do not know how much their father and mother love them: no other sentiment can be compared to that one—no being will ever share like them in their grief and in their joy. The lover, the spouse, form interested wishes—they want first to be loved; but a mother's love is much more noble, much purer—she only asks of heaven to see her children happy.

The marriage was blessed by me in the afternoon. I would that every father had the right of sanctifying the union of his children: they would then comprehend a sentiment which I cannot express.

CHAP. V.

The stranger.

'Is it permissible?' said a strange voice at the door of the room where we were at supper; and at the same instant it opened, and we saw a little, spare, elderly man come in. I rose up from table, and asked to know what he wished.

'I hope, mr. Pastor, that you will excuse me,' said he to me, with an open cordial air; 'my coachman assures me that we cannot reach the city this evening; the roads are in a dangerous state, and I must pass the night in this village. If you will permit a plain cheerful man to partake your joy, I will gladly remain some hours along with you.'

All this was spoken so quick, and with such an animated tone, and this little figure all in motion was so comical, that my children had much to do to keep from laughing.

I was rather embarrassed. Except the old schoolmaster, whom I had invited because he was always particularly fond of Elizabeth, we were so exactly *in family*, that any strange face would only be a restraint upon us; this was so true, that my wife and children, and particularly Elizabeth, expressed by their looks the desire that I should refuse. I knew not how to do it; but, before I had time to say a word, he observed to me, with good-humor——

'I see in all your eyes that I am not too welcome to your little feast; and I perceive the reason very well; you are I see quite in family, and on such an occasion a stranger is a check upon the effusion of the heart. Were I in your place, I might look as you do; but I

should be to blame. Listen; I also am the father of several children; I also have a daughter who is going to be married. When I learned at the inn that you had married your's to-day, I imagined that my heart and sentiments would not be strangers in the midst of you. I wanted to shake the hands of a good father and mother—to embrace the young spouses, and unite your happiness and my joy.'

In saying that, he stretched us his hand, and pressed mine with cordiality.

It was not possible to refuse hospitality to a man who took this method of demanding it. I saw every face brighten, and every individual of my family begged him to stay. He sat down, ate, drank, chatted, and was what he promised to be—an agreeable, cheerful guest: in a few minutes he appeared as much at his ease, and incommoded us as little, as if he had been one of the family.

As soon as we rose from table, Elizabeth came to throw herself into my arms, and asked my benediction. I laid my hand upon her forehead.

'Dear child,' cried I, with emotion, 'may God grant thee many days like this!'

She then went to embrace her mother, her brothers, and sisters.

The grey man, it is thus the children named the stranger, because he was intirely dressed in that color; and his countenance had nearly the same tint, the grey man took Elizabeth by the hand in his turn, and said——

'Young woman, may God shower down happiness upon all your life, and give you patience and fortitude! may you have every year a day like this!'

The lively little stranger delivered all his sentences with a tone as gay and animated as if they had been epigrams, and interspersed them with little stories, that made the youngest children comprehend what he meant. All, except Elizabeth and Wahlen who scarcely listen-

ed to him, had their eyes fixed upon him; and I only complied with the wish of all my family, in offering him a chamber for the night. He accepted it without compliment, and sent for his little trunk to the inn. We then sat down in a circle, and he was so very amusing, that none of us perceived that it grew late, and that Elizabeth and Wahlen had disappeared. Soon after the children retired also. I, my wife, Charles, and Mina remained with the stranger. The conversation now took a serious turn; from speaking of the happiness of our Elizabeth, we began to expatiate upon happiness in general.

'I should think,' observed my guest to me, 'from what I have seen of your way of living, that you must be happy.'

I shook my head.

'To be happy,' replied I, 'when one is the father of a numerous family, one should be richer than I am;—not much richer, but a little.'

'All men say the same thing; the richest as well as the poorest—every one would fain have something more than he has.'

'According to your system,' said Mina, 'every body might be happy, even the poorest of mankind.'

The stranger.—'And why not, if they have health, liberty and a good heart?—ought not that to suffice?—it would be easy for me to prove to you, my young friend, that it is only envy and vanity which demand more.'

Mina.—'Envy! vanity!—call them what you please, but those passions must be satisfied, since man is vain and envious.'

The stranger.—'Are they all so, without exception?—and is the envious man—is the vain man as good as he can be?—answer me, if you please.'

Mina.—'I answer, that to content themselves with as little, they should live as we have done. I have been only once to the city, but I know the difference very well.'

The stranger—' I do not see why wise men, who know what they really stand in need of, should choose to live otherwise.'

Miss—' Can all the world lead this kind of life, and remain as we do, in the narrow circle of a domestic and retired life ?'

The stranger—' We all can, more or less. But if it be impossible, if we be forced to mix in the world, we should at least live with other men as a tender mother lives with her children : they offend her a hundred times, and a hundred times she forgives them ; she excuses their faults, and rejoices at their good qualities. We must not content ourselves with being just, for others have a right to exact that of us ; but we must be indulgent—we must have our heart penetrated with the love of our neighbor, and with fraternal benevolence. I have lived a long time among men, and have almost always succeeded in what I desired, by knowing how and when to yield, even when I was in the right. Certainly I am happy ; for my happiness proceeds from my temper, and depends on nobody. I have been often deceived. I have lavished benefits upon ingrates. I have met with men who were vain, ambitious, proud, gross and negligent : and then I let the proud boast—the ambitious take the first place. I yielded to the obstinate ; I was silent with the gross ; I expected nothing from the ungrateful ; I avoided the deceiver ; and I thought—the world is composed in this manner, it must be borne with. It is by these means I have escaped the sorrows which attend those vile passions, and have lived tranquilly by confining myself to the least numerous society possible. My projects have always been within the limits of my means ; and I do as much good as I can in the circle in which I am placed, without ostentation and without noise. In other respects I let the world go as it will, without giving myself any trouble about it. Behold my confession of faith.'

Charles was listening a long time, and contracting his brow, and I was desirous of hearing him explain his thoughts.

'I am of opinion, sir,' said he at last, 'that there would be nothing great done in the world if all men were of that way of thinking.'

'What matter?' replied my guest; 'they would all be happy, and I believe that is all which is essential. Providence can have no other end.'

'But,' rejoined Charles, 'must not man concur to accomplish this end in an active manner?—and that cannot be done by remaining planted in the spot where fate has cast him. He should not confine himself merely to the narrow bounds of his family, his village, his city, or his country; but should extend the sphere of his activity to the world, and all human kind: and if the occasion do not offer, his duty is to seek it.'

'Well said young man!' cried the stranger, smiling, 'but the most efficacious manner in which he can act usefully in the immense circle of the world, and for the good of humanity, is to fill his place in the circumscribed circle of domestic virtues; to form around him an atmosphere of love and benevolence. He *must*, say you, he *must*—yes, he must do the good that lies within his power; it belongs afterwards to providence, and not to him, to make that good contribute to the general utility.—Show me one general and good result that is an effect of the foresight and will of men?—they may see very well what is great and beautiful; but there is a vast difference between to *know*, and to *will*: that is, to *will* in a manner sufficiently energetic to sacrifice to that will.—Cite any thing really great and admirable to me, and I will show you, perhaps several centuries before, the embryo of that result. Men who were good, simple and virtuous have, without knowing it, forwarded its maturity, by laboring in the narrow scope of their domestic life.'

'But,' cried Charles, interrupting him with a triumphant look, 'did the great man who knows how to improve that embryo, who seizes the moment of developing it for the good of humanity—he who has willed, who

has effected that good, did he effect it by remaining quietly in the bosom of his family?'

'Where shall we find that great man,' replied the stranger, '*who wills the good*, who devotes himself to the happiness of his fellow-creatures, without any view of personal interest or ambition? and do not these passions always lead astray? *he has willed the good*, say you; I reply that he has been impelled to will it:—the first step he took has necessitated the rest: if he succeed, he is a great man; if he do not succeed, he is a madman. It is, besides, worthy of remark, that almost all the great reformers had no family; that general activity is only the dream of a young heart exalted like your's, or else the turbulent desire of ambition. The ardent soul of Alexander had conceived the gigantic plan of uniting the three parts of the world under the Greek civilization; the greatest, the noblest project perhaps that ever entered the mind of a conqueror; but what bloodshed, what a multiplicity of horrors lay inevitable upon the road that led to its accomplishment!'

'And,' said I, in my turn, 'are not the means of providence also frequently very terrible?'

'Providence! without doubt; but will you dare to compare the sublime wisdom, the eternal love, to this grain of dust—to man, who is separated from the tomb only by a few steps which he traverses more or less rapidly? but is man sure of succeeding when he undertakes? the plan of Alexander has been overturned, and rivers of blood have flowed in vain. What good would happen upon earth if it were necessary to expect it from men? when Columbus discovered a new world, peopled with savages, what a fine opportunity was presented for Europe to spread over those countries the benefits she derived from providence! but, on the contrary, th unfeeling spaniards sacrifice millions of men to their avidity; they bury them alive in the gold mines of their unfortunate country: and those poor wretches suffer the worst of torments, to enrich their cruel vanquishers.'

'I hope,' cried my wife, sighing, 'that the spaniards did not know all the harm they were doing.'

'They knew it but too well. The respectable Las Casas was witness to the cruelties they exercised toward a people whose virtues they knew and acknowledged: he alone took their part. Whole years elapsed, and their barbarity, far from diminishing, extended itself still further, and threatened to destroy intirely that part of the globe; but providence took pity on those deplorable victims: a small circumstance, perfectly independent of the will of man, saved America. Some spanish horses escaped into the deserts, and multiplied at large. The americans, until then timid, because they had no means of defence, learned to make use of that serviceable animal; and, with his assistance, formed warlike nations, who made their tyrants tremble in their turn.'

'And I, also,' said I, with compassion, 'I hope that the spaniards sinned through ignorance. In those distant times study, sage philosophy had not yet——'

'And in this enlightened century,' interrupted the stranger, 'the most polished nations, the english and french, buy unfortunate negroes, and make them suffer a thousand torments in their plantations. There, it was for gold; here, it is for sugar, which is to procure them gold—behold the only difference: thus it is still for a little gold that man sacrifices his fellow-creature. Those I mention know very well what they are doing: it is before God, it is while they are speaking of beneficence and humanity, while they are reading and writing discourses on morality and justice, that they lead their brothers with cruelties. And who is the great man that dares to step forward to the relief of those unfortunate creatures? no; their woes will continue until providence, by some means perhaps as feeble in appearance, deliver Africa, as it has delivered America.'

'And it will do it most undoubtedly,' said I: 'may I live long enough to witness it!*'

'And who is it that will relieve the Hindoos?' cried the stranger: 'it will not be a great man; for if he raised his voice, it would be soon smothered by the clamors of cupidity; and if he persisted in attempting to make his voice be heard, he would be persecuted, and put in irons himself: no, wise providence has other means of attaining its purpose. The men who desire the good of humanity sincerely, cannot do better than to refer it to providence alone, and to concur in doing all the good, and making as many happy in their own little circle of influence, as they can. Let each do as much, and the whole universe will be happy.

It struck the midnight hour; the stranger rose up, and went to his chamber.

'He is not a great philosopher, said Charles, 'but I believe him to be an excellent man.'

'I imagined,' replied Mina, showing us to our chambers, 'that the best philosophy was to be good; but you attach singular ideas to that word *philosophy*.'

* The stranger was right: providence is employing a much smaller means than the agency of men, to effect that revolution. A root, until now neglected, the beet, will restore a world to repose, happiness, and domestic tranquillity; sugar is now making at Berlin; and Africa is about to become happy and free.

CHAP. VI.

The pearl necklace.

NEXT morning we were all occupied with cares and thoughts as various as our persons. Elizabeth dreamed of nothing but Wahlen and felicity; I was thinking, with sorrow, of her approaching departure from the paternal dwelling; and my wife with uneasiness of the scanty paraphernalia we had in our power to give her. Mina, leaning on the window, was wrapped in reverie, and looking toward Salzman's farm; while Charles, walking with the stranger in the garden, seemed busily engaged in some philosophical discussion.

'If that man would but go away,' cried my wife and I both at the same time, 'we might speak of Elizabeth's departure, and of what we could give her.'

At length word was brought from the inn that the coach was ready.

'I will see you again, my dear friend,' said he to me, 'I will see you again soon;' and he opened his trunk, from which he took out a little casket, containing four rounds of pretty large pearls of a curious form, 'Here, child,' said he to Mina, 'here is something to remind you of the old stranger's morality.'

He took leave of us all, and set off.

'Should he not have made that present to Elizabeth?' whispered Augusta to me.

I conceived it rather singular too, that it was not to the bride he had offered it.

The young couple came to join us. Wahlen mentioned to me that he had received a menacing letter from his uncle, the baron, which made him give up all hopes of a reconciliation. His maternal uncle had not deigned even to reply.

My wife looked at me, and sighed sorrowfully. I repeated, on this occasion, a part of what the stranger had said the evening before.

'So much the better, my son,' said I to him: 'Elizabeth will remain in her own sphere; you will not be richer than I, my son, and you may be as happy.'

He embraced his wife, exclaiming—'here is my treasure!'

Mine only looked sadder still.

A question occupied us afterwards: shall we pay a visit at intendant Schink's? there were considerations for and against it. In our village he represented the count, and as such I ought to communicate my daughter's marriage to him; but I felt some repugnance to it, although time had somewhat diminished our old dislike, and that we used to speak to one another politely whenever we met.

It was however, resolved that my wife and I should go with the young couple. Mina insisted that Elizabeth should dress more than usual for this visit; but the bride wished, on the contrary, to go as plain as possible.

We were received with singular airs enough. Mrs. Schink called Elizabeth quite simply, *mrs. Wahlen*; while the intendant affected at every minute to call her *my lady Wahlen*; but it was with a little ironical smile.

Elizabeth's deportment was at once noble and unassuming: she admired the splendor of the apartment without exaggeration; spoke without embarrassment of her husband's confined position, of the little farm they were going to settle in, the simple and industrious life they intended to lead, &c. and all that so naturally

that the proud mrs. Schink was overawed, and became more polite and friendly. Her husband was, as usual, very haughty toward us—very humble toward Wahlen, who, on his side, well knew how to unite politeness with dignity, and catch that difficult shade which gives birth and a good education so many advantages over riches. On the whole, our visit terminated better than it had begun, and we were tolerably pleased after all.

Some days afterwards the intendant sent us an invitation to dinner, which included Charles and Mina. The servant told us, at the same time, that the entertainment was in honor of miss Juliet Schink, the intendant's only daughter, who was come from the boarding-school on a visit to her parents. We accepted the invitation.

Mina would have been very glad, had we dressed as expansively as possible on this occasion, and wanted Elizabeth to wear the *grey man's* pearls; but Eliza refused them, as she was determined to persist in her simplicity, and said all she could to prevail upon her sister to give up that idea. Mina, however, dressed herself as elegantly as possible, and put on the necklace herself.

Mrs. Schink introduced us to her daughter, who was about fifteen, very pretty, and appeared to be of a disposition perfectly opposite to her mother's. She saluted us with graceful bashfulness; and, as soon as her mother turned her back, took my daughters by the hand, or said something friendly to them.

There were great preparations made at the castle for this entertainment, and a great deal of company arrived from the city and neighboring seats. We had been only invited, to make us feel the superiority of wealth and luxury; and mrs. Schink, who thought of nothing but of shining herself, or displaying her daughter to advantage, imagined that our village simplicity, and the ill taste of my daughters' dress, would serve for a foil to herself and Juliet. She never missed introducing the simple Elizabeth first, when any person entered, saying—'here is mrs. Wahlen, our pastor's daughter;' and then presented her

daughter, who was attired with the most costly elegance. But the amiable Juliet, with a captivating grace, and in spite of her mother's signs, showed so much friendship for my daughters, and so much attention to my wife and me, that every body was induced to imitate her.

At dinner, my self-love was in sufferance for Charles; he sat at an awkward distance from the table, ate nothing, seemed uneasy, and had his eyes constantly cast down. Mina, who was more at her ease, observed an old canoness opposite to her, looking at her with a great deal of attention, and then whispering a lady in the ear who sat next her, and who immediately looked at her in the same manner. She blushed a little, and said to them with some displeasure——

'You are looking at me with great attention, ladies; be so good as to tell me if I have any thing extraordinary upon me.'

'Oh! dear me, no miss,' replied one of them; 'we are only admiring your superb necklace.'

Mina, who thought it little better than paltry, was ready to cry at what she supposed to be an irony: but she was mistaken.

'It has struck me also,' said mrs. Schink; 'they are really very beautiful large pearls; I have seen but few of such a fine water. Will you please to show them to me, my dear?'

Mina, consoled at this, took off the necklace, and handed it to her.

'They are infinitely finer than yours, Juliet,' said she to her daughter, with a tone of envy which was sufficient to put Mina completely at her ease; 'however, I think yours better matched;—go bring your necklace.'

She ran, and brought two rows of of pearls very inferior to Mina's, as was allowed by all the company. Mrs. Schink reddened with spite in her turn; and her amiable daughter ran, with grace and gaiety, to put on Mina's necklace, saying to her——

'I am quite jealous, my dear friend; it is much finer than mine.'

Mrs. Schink, having failed in this attempt, changed to another subject. She spoke of the boarding-school where her daughter was brought up—of all that her brilliant education cost her—of the impossibility of learning any thing by staying in the village—of the awkwardness of young persons who had always lived in it. This was all so visibly directed at us, that it was impossible not to remark it.

Juliet raised suppliant looks to her indiscreet mother. Then the father began.

'I do not regret,' said he, puffing himself out, 'the enormous expense my daughter's education puts me to: she sings, and plays the piano like an angel; she dances to perfection, and speaks french like a court lady, and english too—do you not Juliet?'

The poor child was in tortures, and strove, with suffering modesty, to turn the conversation; but in vain—her father would not stop.

'Speak french now,' said he to her; 'do not be like a little simpleton—show what you can do.'

We shared in the confusion and pain she felt, and did not dare to look at her. When her father ordered her to speak french, I believe that it would not have been possible for her to speak in any language. Wahlen, who was beside her, said something to her in french; then she took courage, and replied a few words. When he perceived that no person in company understood that language, he told her not to be uneasy at what had passed, but to look upon the whole scene as a comedy. She replied with tears in her eyes—

'No, it cannot be indifferent to me; if it were only myself that was made uneasy, I deserve it—I did not obey my father's orders quick enough; I should, I know very well, have spoken french as soon as he ordered me: but to speak the first, and in a language nobody else understood, I assure you was impossible; and I am obliged to

you for having helped me to give my parents this pleasure.'

Wahlen kissed her hand with an air of gallantry.

'*Bravo! bravo!*' cried the intendant, charmed at this proof of respect and admiration. 'Really, my lord, does she not speak french as if she came from Paris?—oh what a fine thing a fine education is!'

'What she has said, would be admirable in every language,' replied Wahlen.

He continued to chat with Juliet, while her father was making the panegyric of her talents.

'Speak english now, Juliet,' said her father, when he had done; 'and after dinner you will sing, and play the piano; and then you will dance.'

'Come, keep up your spirits, miss,' cried Wahlen; 'I wish I could assist you still.'

She smiled sadly—, ah! if you could but speak english!'

'I do not speak it yet; but I am in good hands to learn it: my wife and all her family know it.—In your turn, brother,' said he to Charles, 'converse with the young lady in english.'

Charles colored as much as Juliet, and could hardly stammer a few words.

Mina spoke, and told her how much we had all sympathized in her embarrassment.

'Ah!' cried Juliet, joyfully, 'I no longer regret it; you speak english, and I can thank you for the tender interest you show for me, and tell you with what friendship you have inspired me from the first moment I saw you;—and I can ask your's in return.'

Mina answered her in the same manner. Elizabeth who had not ceased to regard her with tender admiration,

and to encourage her husband, by signs, to speak to her, said several handsome things to her. I joined in the conversation, and we all declared with what esteem we were penetrated for her.

She then strove to excuse her parents for their too great prepossession in her favor; and that in so delicate a manner, that she completely won our hearts; and Mina said to her—'indeed you must be our friend.'

Thus in the midst of insignificant beings, who would not have understood us, perhaps, had we spoke even their own language, we began a most interesting and sentimental conversation.

At length we perceived by her parents' looks, that the conversation was continuing too long, and we ceased. My children had resumed their gaiety, except Charles, whom I had never seen so disconcerted: he was the greatest proficient of all in english, and yet did not utter three syllables during our conversation.

The intendant's lady also was disconcerted. 'It is astonishing,' cried she, 'really astonishing; and never to have been out of their village! who could have imagined it?'

On rising from table, she went over to Mina, and patted her cheek, saying—

'Dear little girl! such a fine pearl necklace, and to speak english so well! could one have thought it? it is a great pity indeed that your brother-in-law is so poor, and irremediably broke with his uncle; he might have introduced you into the world.'

Juliet then came to embrace her dear friend; and told her mother that my daughter's pronunciation was much better than hers, which was true, and that she would improve considerably by speaking english along with them.

'Well then,' replied mrs. Schink, 'miss Minette will be so good as to come to see you sometimes while you remain here, and you can speak english with her.'

That evening, on returning to our house, Mina was gay interiorly—that is, she spoke little, and seemed even at some moments to be lost in thought; but her smile, tenderness, look, discovered that she felt a sentiment of delight whose cause was unknown to us.

Three days after—we were alone, my wife and me—she opened the door; an extraordinary something agitated her countenance and all her motions—it was a confusion of joy and tenderness; tears trickled from her eyes, and the sweetest smile quivered on her lips.

'What ails you, Mina?' demanded I; 'what is the matter?'

She had in her hand two packets, which she opened, trembling.

'Here, mother,' said she, presenting her two dozen of silver spoons and forks, 'here is for you!'

The other contained more gold ducats than I had ever seen in my life.

'Dear papa,' cried she, 'there is something to complete Elizabeth's wardrobe, and send our Charles to the university; and here,' said she, giving us one of her rows of pearls, 'here is what may serve us in case of need, if we be again exposed to it.'

'Ah, good providence!' exclaimed my wife, 'thou hast sold the rest.—Is it possible they have produced so much!'

'It is much more than I hoped,' replied the affectionate girl, laughing. 'Since I learned by chance, at mr. Schmahl's dinner, how many necklace was worth, every pearl which a lord that oppressed me. I wrote to mrs. Salzberg, telling her all about it, and begged her to sell three rows. Here is what she sends me to-day. And this fourth row, dear mamma,' added she, 'is your's.——It will serve you, perhaps, one day for the wardrobe of another child;' and she tied it round her mother's arm.

This excited a combat of generosity which drew forth my old cocq——

'Oh my mother!' cried Mina, 'as long as I saw your heart oppressed with inquietude, this necklace would be an insupportable burden to me;—as long as I saw pearls in those eyes,' said she, smiling, 'could I wear any round my neck?'

'Dear child, they are now tears of joy!'

'Of the sweetest, the most delicious joy,' cried I. 'Yes, my child, they are pearls which are much more precious than thy necklace;—they will form the immortal crown that angels are preparing for thy filial piety.'

'Do not then refuse this trifling proof of it, my dear father—my mother, do not refuse your child.'

My wife yielded, and we mingled in silence our tears and embraces.

'Good night!' said Mina, sweetly, when the hour of retiring struck.

'Good night, excellent girl!' we replied together.

It seemed as if celestial intelligences, august witnesses of this melting scene, hovered about us, and that a holy respect prevented our speaking aloud.—We separated without saying another word;—but how much eloquence was in the expression of that *good night!*

My wife began, next morning, to work at making up Elizabeth's wardrobe. She gave all her children new clothes, and then herself; and Mina had no more than the rest. I thanked my wife for having respected her delicacy; but the dear girl soon had her recompense.—The children jumped with joy on seeing their new clothes, and came to Mina to have them admired. My wife, shewing Mina her new robe, said to her—'see, my angel, how pretty it is!'

Her voice tremulated with delight, and the sweetest joy shone in Mina's eyes. My heart palpitated; I embraced them both with a heavenly emotion, exclaiming—

'How happy, how truly rich are we!—is it possible to be more so?'

CHAP. VII.

The separation.

ELIZABETH knew nothing at all of what has been just read; she did not even suspect that we were thinking of her wardrobe; in fact, she was ignorant of every thing that was going on out of the circle of her love and happiness. The day before that fixed for her departure, we were speaking of it with sorrow; when the *grey man*, whom I shall henceforth call by the name he was announced by, mr. Friedleben, came to see us. His salutation was so cordial, and we looked upon him already to be so much a friend to the family, that we continued our discourse.

'Yes, my friend, you are right,' observed my wife, 'love absorbs every other consideration. Look at Elizabeth walking with her husband in the garden—I will engage she is saying to him—' to-morrow, to-morrow I will be intirely thine;—I will exist only for thee!' she does not reflect that to-morrow we shall no longer see our daughter.'

Tears started into my eyes; but I strove to hide them.

'Let us thank God for that effect of love,' said I; 'if it had not so much power—if a sigh, a look, a word from the beloved object had not a stronger attraction than the heart of a mother, could a child ever separate from those who have given it life, and brought it up?—every family would remain always together, like a flock of sheep—criminal unions would ensue—the defects and vices of families would be perpetuated, and become inseparable from human nature—and men, stationary like a pond of

stagnant water, would grovel in the errors and prejudices of their ancestors.

'As the people, whose religion has formed them into separate casts or sects, do not come to perfection, like the fruits that grow in their forests, it is only by grafting them upon another fruit that they grow better. It is the mixture of nations and of individuals that has civilized the world. Nature has wisely implanted in the heart of man the desire of seeking perfection and happiness in a foreign attachment; it is for this that incest is repelled by the laws of nature, still more than by the laws of men. From this springs the powerful sentiment that makes the youth and timid maiden quit the protecting roof of their parents, to throw themselves into the arms of a being, who, but a short time before, was an utter stranger.'

'It is on that account,' cried Charles, a little conceited at the thought he was about to communicate, 'that the greeks, who were an assemblage of adventurers and fugitives from Asia, Africa, and the north of Europe, became the most remarkable people that has existed, or can ever exist.'

'That is true,' replied mr. Friedleben; 'but why may there not be another equal, nay, superior to them, if it be true that human nature tends to its perfection! it must happen. Greece furnished the nations who were to succeed it with the rich tribute of its arts, its exquisite genius, its poetry, its public and private virtues, and then disappeared from the surface of the earth, for what remains, does not deserve to be mentioned; because human nature was not to be composed of greeks, but of men who should combine in their successive improvement, the beautiful, the good, and the advantages of every nation civilized. If it were not so, what could have been the intention of providence in permitting the roman people, after having attained to such an eminent degree of science and civilization, to have been destroyed by the barbarians of the north? a people tears itself from its maternal soil, like a young girl from her mother's arms, and goes afar to effect a happy union with the inhabitants of a foreign clime. Such is the progress

and fate of nations, and of the individuals who are thus to arrive at their destination.'

'You see at present, wife,' said I, 'why our Elizabeth—'

'Say what you will,' interrupted my good Augusta, 'I know not if it be the law of nature; but it seems to me that it cost me a great deal more when I quitted my parents' house.'

This was what I was waiting for. I had as fresh as yesterday in my memory the day when my Augusta left the paternal dwelling.

'Wife,' said I, 'hast thou forgot the day when we slipped through the garden to come here? when you stopped under the woodbine summer-house, and turning about, said with gaiety, although you had tears in your eyes too—'farewel, father! farewel, mother! farewel, garden, where I have passed my happy childhood!' and then threw yourself into my arms. 'Augusta,' said I, 'wilt thou never regret what thou art now quitting? you pressed me tenderly to your bosom, palpitating with love. 'Ah!' cried you, 'may all the tears I have to shed in the course of my life, be as pleasing as what I shed on quitting this house! I regret any thing when I behold my Charles! no, thou dost not believe it!' Augusta, those delightful words are engraven here in my heart; and each instant of thy life thou hast confirmed them. Why should it not be the same with Elizabeth? shall we envy her the happiness she is going to enjoy with him she loves?'

My wife had no more to say.

Next morning Charles, Mina, and I accompanied this beloved girl to her new dwelling. She wept a great deal on bidding farewel to her mother, her youngest sister, and little brothers. But soon, leaning on her husband's arm, she recovered her serenity, and walked gaily first toward the house they were going to reside in together. Wahlen's little estate lay at the distance of about thirty miles from our village. Elizabeth's effects had been given to a waggoner, as my wife thought that a

carriage would be too dear. Friend Friedleben, learning that we were going a-foot, desired to be of the party.

It was a fine morning in June. Charles and Wahlen carried a little bundle of linen for us; and Friedleben was loaded with a hunting-bag, which was pretty full. A joyous farewel from our little ones, and the sobs and blessings of my wife, accompanied us at the moment of departure; and our little caravan set out toward Hazenrode, the village of which my father-in-law had been pastor, and which was upon the road.

'It is twenty years,' said I, showing them the parsonage garden, 'since I passed through that little door with your mother, to conduct her to my own house, as Wahlen is doing to-day.'

Friedleben perceived I had a mind to stop a moment, and proposed breakfasting: we sat down on the grass close to the garden, and the provisions contained in the hunting-bag were spread out. The sight of the door and woodbine summer-house reminded me strongly of my youth; on looking at Elizabeth, I fancied I saw my Augusta in the bloom of her younger days; never have I felt a more pleasing melancholy—never was I more struck with the rapidity of life, and the changes it brings about. I recounted the particulars of my marriage; I talked of my youth, and of my courtship with a vivacity which was animated still more by the sight of the little door, and some glasses of good wine that Friedleben had brought along with him.

My son then commenced, and spoke of love too with a warmth which was not usual to him.

'My son,' cried I to him, the first moment he made a pause, 'I do not like to hear thee speak with so much enthusiasm of a passion thou dost not yet know.'

'Why then, father—why should I speak coldly of a sentiment you describe yourself to be supreme happi-

ness? love—such as I imagine it to be, an intimate union with a being of our nature—two souls which seek each other, meet, and become one—love, I say, is what likens man most to the divinity; and you will have me treat it coldly! ah! the more I think of it, and I think of it often, since the moment Wahlen obtained your consent, the more I reflect, the more——'

'Unlucky novels!' cried I; 'and who made you read them?'

'I have never read any, father; whatever desire Mina's reflections on the different sorts of love might have given me, you know my mother took all those books, and I have not seen them since; besides, did I not give you my word not to read any? but the night after Wahlen, transported with love, took Elizabeth in his arms, crying—'mine for life!' I read the history of Elbradates and his wife in Xenophon ten times over; and I have read it very often since. Ah! he was happier far than Cyrus: he had a wife that loved him to such a degree, as to die for him!'

'I wish, my son,' said I with a serious tone, 'that you were less taken with that history.'

'For what, dear father? so far from doing me any harm, I feel myself capable, on reading it, of the same fidelity and love. And the melting history of Eponimia, Suetonius and Plutarch——'

'Father,' cried Elizabeth, embracing me, 'your children are destined to love.—It is love that gave them existence, and it is love that will render them happy: it animates all our hearts, and must also purify them;—by it we become more virtuous, and acquire more fortitude.'

'Yes, it is what we will become!' they all three cried.

'And the image of an adored object,' continued Charles, 'which engages all the finer faculties of my mind, is neither a dream nor an illusion; I am sure it exists, and I will

not cease to seek it and to love it. It is possible that my hand may never touch hers; but no matter—I feel that I could die for her; and if that fate be not reserved for me, there is no virtuous action of which I do not feel myself capable, on thinking of her.'

'That should equally be the case from other motives,' observed Friendleben; 'however, there may be some truth in what you say. What is this ideal love?—it is the presentiment of a better world, and that presentiment must lead to virtue.'

'I do not think it right to occupy one's self with an imaginary object,' rejoined I; 'it makes us discontented with the world.'

'Oh my friend!' cried Friedleben, 'unhappy is the man whose soul does not aspire beyond the world in which we live. We must be occupied with an ideal object of perfection, to become more humane and better, and to prepare our souls for the real perfection which must one day be their condition; it is not fit that we should be solely occupied with ourselves and what surrounds us; and that, satisfied with this life, our ideas should never stretch beyond it toward worlds unknown. I do not like the dreamers who would have the sky more blue, the verdure more blooming, the sun milder, nights clearer, and a perpetual spring, no old age, and all men perfect as angels.

'But is he a senseless dreamer who says, that men would be happier if they were all just, sincere, and humane like Socrates?—there is a proof that it only depends upon man himself to be virtuous, in spite of the evil inclinations of nature. Is he a senseless dreamer who, by a strong resolution, renders himself master of his passions, and takes a firm determination to become better than the best of all the men he knows? he forms an ideal model of human perfection to himself; and it is in striving to attain it, that he fulfils indeed the end of his creation.'

'Very good,' said I; 'but that was not Charles's idea.'

'I assure you,' said Friedleben, 'that it was certainly

his idea to the strong tendency of his mind toward an ideal object, are joined the tender sympathies of a warm and susceptible heart; and at eighteen, that object naturally takes the seducing form of a young and beautiful girl.'

At that instant a blast of wind opened the garden-door opposite us, and behind it appeared miss Juliet Schink. She blushed at being perceived; but running toward us, like a bird, she threw her arms round Mina's neck, telling her that she was just coming from paying a visit to the minister's wife; which was not exactly true, as I had for a long time remarked a little foot through the aperture under the door, without suspecting to whom it belonged. This incident put an end to our discussion about the ideal object, and we rose up to continue our journey.—Juliet accompanied us as far as the little wood that skirts Hazenrode, and then left us to return home.

'I would lay a wager,' said Mina, when the amiable girl was gone, 'that Juliet Schink has some features of my brother's ideal object.'

Charles colored exceedingly, and defended himself with too much earnestness. He then remained several paces behind, and walked after us musing, while we gaily pursued our way.

We arrived that evening at a small town, where we intended sleeping. The innkeeper, seeing that we were pedestrians, did not give himself much trouble about us, and pretended he had no lodging. Wahlen, forgetting that he was not travelling with the equipage of a baron, spoke to him with haughtiness, on which a pretty smart altercation ensued between him and Friedleben, who did not let slip this occasion to retail his maxims of morality; and preached to us a long while on the respect we owe to our inferiors, because they have the misfortune to be so, and taxed the young baron sharply with his pride.

'Upon what do you found your superiority?' said he to him. 'is it because you are better clad, better fed?—because you have a more cultivated mind, a better educa-

tion?—but those advantages are not personal to you; it is chance, it is your education that has given them to you. And is he not superior to you, who, to procure a livelihood for his wife and children, exposes himself to humiliation like this honest innkeeper; or ploughs his field on a rainy day, and reaps it under the scorching influence of the dog-star?—Should we not see in him a man and a brother?—doubtless distinction of ranks is necessary; but is it not the duty of him who is most favored by fate, to console him who is not, instead of adding to the evils he endures, the still greater evil of contempt.'

'You are right,' said Wahlen; 'but you are mistaken as to the motive: it is not at poverty that, what you call contempt is pointed; it is at the vices it gives birth to—boorishness, avidity and distrust. The low cringing ways of the poor seem to us to be a defect of temper, while they are nothing but a natural effect of education and forced labor; and the little attention which is shewn by generous minds at least, proceeds from the natural aversion entertained for those vices.'

'Proceeds only from pride!' retorted Friedleben, drily; 'how much respect and politeness do you shew in the societies of the world for vices much more dangerous and contemptible! on no occasion would you speak to the rich or titled sloven, or wicked libertine, as you have just now spoken to this innkeeper.'

'He is accustomed to it,' remarked Mina; 'and he is not sensible to proceedings that would affect us painfully.'

'Young woman,' rejoined Friedleben, with an angry tone, 'do not accustom yourself to play with the sensibility of your brothers; or to see, or cause their feelings to be wounded, saying *they are used to it*;—nothing hardens the heart more. Millions of men are called to suffer, for the purpose of rendering the lives of some others, I will not say happier, but more brilliant; therefore I repeat, that it is their duty to compensate for this unequal lot, as far as in them lies, by constant affability and good conduct.'

Minette was silent. Wahlen walked up and down the room, divided between conviction and vexation. I do not know which astonished me most—the manner of this stranger toward us, or the ascendency he assumed over my children and myself. Wahlen, with a great deal of mildness and sensibility, had however some tincture of the stubborn haughtiness of the german nobility. When Friedleben, therefore, spoke to him with firmness, and an authority which is seldom borne with, except from a father or superior, he reddened, turned pale, frowned, bit his lips, and I could see that he was on the point of breaking out; but whether it were the coolness of the stranger, who went on still without seeming to notice it, or the force and justness of his reasoning, Wahlen calmed also by degrees, and ended by yielding, and acknowledging his impropriety, at least tacitly. The innkeeper came in; he spoke to him with kindness, and soon after we got good accommodations.

'You see,' said I, going in, 'that it is useful to be civil sometimes.'

Next day, pretty early, we arrived at Wahlen's little seat. Elizabeth was transported with pleasure at seeing her little dwelling, whose outside had an air of neatness, and even of elegance. I found it myself much above what I had imagined. Charles and Mina were delighted too, and Wahlen enjoyed our praises. Friedleben alone said not a word, and I perceived an expression of dissatisfaction in his looks.

The old domestic who inhabited the house, and whose countenance expressed honesty and attachment for his master, came to meet us with a thousand demonstrations of respect: he wanted to kiss the skirt of his young mistress's robe, which she would not permit, but stretched out her hand to him in a friendly manner. At every word it was my lady baroness, or my lord baron. He was well dressed, in white silk stockings a little faded by time, and a good cloth coat with tarnished gilt brass buttons. I watched Friedleben: he so strongly detested every thing that touched on ostentation or pride, that I was afraid this old servant's respects would become the object of his criticisms; but, on the contrary, he pressed

his hand with cordiality, and led the manufacturer to Wahlen, who shewed every friendship to the good man, and presented him to us, saying—

'This is my father, my sister, my brother, our friend.'

Wahlen then led his spouse into a chamber on the ground floor, which was intended for her. It was papered and furnished very elegantly. Elizabeth was not able to say any thing, but embraced him tenderly. Minette ran to sit down on the sofa; Charles began to turn over a set of well bound books ranged on a pretty shelf; and I, smiling with pleasure, examined the comfortable dwelling of my Elizabeth; but I dared not say any thing, for I observed Friedleben frown more and more.

'You may look as cross as you please, mr. Fridleben,' said Minette, 'yet I think all is very fine.'

'Your sister thinks so too,' replied he, 'and that for just.' He was a moment silent, and then, half smiling, added—'the rabbins have an opinion, which I entertain as well as they, although I am not of their religion, that the devil did not show himself to the mother of mankind under the form of a serpent, but under that of a handsome young man, mounted on a large serpent highly ornamented: if he had come to her in any other shape he could not have seduced her.'

'That is not easy hard to believe,' cried Minette, 'an ugly demon and a serpent are not very seducing.'

'Little one, we should not let ourselves be seduced by any demon, under whatever form he may appear.'

'But I see no demon here. I only see my amiable brother-in-law, a handsome room, and a good sofa.'

I related to them then the pleasure I had in ornamenting my wife's chamber with the profits of my little savings.

'The moment of triumph, when one installs a beloved wife in her house like a queen, who is to govern it, happens but once in our life; and one may well, for that once only, deviate a little from the most rigid economy,' said I.

'What makes me serious is quite another thing, and you will know it presently.'

Elisabeth and Wahlen were not present at this conversation; they were gone to look at the little garden behind the house.

Friedleben proposed to me to look at the other apartments, and we went up stairs. I shook my head sometimes in going through with this examination: there was not a room through which the wind did not whistle at every corner; and that in which we had been received, was the only one arranged.

'This is a tolerably airy habitation,' said I, at last, striving to conceal by a pleasantry the disagreeable impression I felt.

'Was I not in the right?' demanded Friedleben. 'A handsome young man, ornamented caparisons, and underneath the devil and the serpent; I saw that beforehand.'

The justness of his apologue gave me pain, but I did not wish to let it be seen; therefore I appeared to coincide with his ideas.

'A crazy house,' said I, 'and a valet in silk stockings—did you observe?'

'That old domestic,' interrupted Friedleben, 'dresses himself on holidays, doubtless, as you see him today: his stockings and clothes are a legacy of his good master; do not therefore make a jest of his celebrating the day of his young mistress's arrival; but——' here Friedleben paused.

'But? go on; you had something to say.'

'You have told me,' resumed he, 'that Wahlen was poor; but it seems to me that he does not sufficiently forget that his birth called him to live in pomp and opulence: he speaks too much of the sacrifices he has made

to love: I fear for your daughter's happiness, that he may at last find them too great.'

'But,' rejoined I, 'if it were so, what would you do in my place?'

'You are his and Elizabeth's father; speak reasonably to him—teach him to seek his happiness where he can find it, and not to wait for an uncertain future; he is as rich as you are—he is even richer—and you have known how to be happy. If we may judge by the soil he can augment his income considerably, if he chooses in good earnest to fulfil his useful calling of a farmer, and forget his useless one of a baron. Ask him to show us his fields to-morrow—I understand something of agriculture.' Then casting his eyes around him—'mercy upon us!' cried he, 'the wind blows through this place on all sides, and the rain must come through in torrents; but what affects me more than all, are the sighs and tears that probably await Elizabeth in this chilly abode. I desire the happiness of all mankind,' added he with a tone of affection; 'but your gentle Elizabeth—I love her as if she were my own child!'

Could I listen to him, and not clasp him in my arms? every thing he said appeared just and good to me; and I promised him to speak to Wahlen, who did not delay joining us with my daughters. He blushed on perceiving Friedleben busy in stopping up the holes in the doors and windows; and Minette, who began to help him, laughed. He wished to jest too; and then began to justify himself seriously.

'I comprehend,' said Friedleben; 'you have surely never lived in this house, and you see these walls for the first time; for it depended only upon yourself to furnish your little parlor less expensively, and to render the whole house habitable.'

'These walls resemble the apparitions of Ossian,' remarked Mina; 'one can see the stars through them.'

Poor Wahlen was really ill at ease; but his wife's caresses contributed to recover his spirits.

Next day we all went to look at the fields; and Friedleben, with his tablets in his hand, took notes as we went along. When we had gone round all Wahlen's land, he told him, with a satisfied air——

'My friend, I assure you that you can become a rich farmer. The ground is excellent, but neglected; and should, one year with another, bring you in seven hundred crowns, if you will take the pains of superintending it yourself.'

Wahlen, whose countenance, until this moment gloomy and serious, now brightened up, stepped gaily between his wife and Friedleben, with whom he began to talk of english farming, and of his plans of amelioration. He grew warm, and drew an enchanting picture of the happiness his Elizabeth and himself would enjoy in their little farm. In calculating the employment of the seven hundred crowns, he let fall a word about a little carriage to come to see us in, and bring us oftener and more commodiously.

I saw, by Friedleben's smile, that he was a little dubious respecting Wahlen's economy and agricultural projects.

'I like hearts such as your's,' said he to him, 'which are continually giving themselves up to hopes: so soon as one is destroyed, they replace it with another. But, however, there is a misfortune incidental to those people of a lively imagination; while they are forming plans of future happiness, they neglect the means of ensuring it; they build palaces in futurity, and let the cottage they possess fall to pieces; instead of fallowing in autumn, and sowing in spring, they are so busy reaping in idea, that they can do nothing. And you, my young friend, you are already riding in the coach, while you should be thinking of nothing yet but the plough.'

Wahlen smiled, and promised to grow wiser; but some minutes after he began to talk of a fine garden he intended to lay out for his Elizabeth.

'I would advise you,' cried Friedleben, 'to prepare the soil for flowers with plantations of cabbages and potatoes.'

At our return I took my daughter aside, and begged her to represent mildly to her husband, that life was too short to spend it in forming projects of happiness, instead of enjoying that which was in our reach. The good little woman was quite unhappy that we were not contented with her dear Wahlen and his residence. She would have persuaded us that the holes were ornaments.

'You are in the right,' observed Mina to her; 'you see nothing through them but roses, and that is as it should be.'

At last we tore ourselves away. Mina would gladly have yielded to her sister's intreaties, who pressed her to pass some time along with her; but Friedleben, whose empire augmented every instant by the force of his judgment and understanding, would not permit her.

'No,' said he; 'those young people must pass a year at least by themselves, to learn to know each other such as they really are, and not such as love has depicted them. Little girl, your sister has no occasion for you at present; and your father has occasion not to lose two daughters at once.'

CHAP. VIII.

Despair.

THAT evening we arrived at the same inn where we had passed a night before. The landlord received us in a friendly manner, but declared his regret at not having it in his power to accommodate us with a chamber to sleep in: they were all taken up as there were a great number of strangers come to the fair, which was now held. We were under the necessity of bearing the disappointment with patience, and contenting ourselves with passing some hours in the kitchen.

Toward evening we went to take a walk in a large meadow at the gates of the town, where the tradesmen had set up their shops: there were diversions and dancing, and all the fine folks of three leagues round, as well dressed as they could afford.

Mina was in a very plain travelling dress; and her little vanity was hurt at the groups of young females, elegantly dressed, who were passing on every side of her and looking on her with disdain. She expressed a desire to go away.

'But why?' cried Friedleben, who amused himself with the bustling multitude; 'say the truth, Minette, what displeases you here?'

She blushed, and said, laughing——

'It is this hat without a feather, and the fine robes and bonnets of those ladies; but what displeases me still more

is my silliness in being ashamed of my dress, as of a bad action.'

'Poor child!' cried Friedleben; 'let us try if there be not some means of cutting a figure also.'

He took her hand, and led her to a milliner's shop: he wanted to buy her a set of ribbons, and a new hat; but she only accepted a black feather, which she put upon the one she wore. She requested him then, in english, to speak to her only in that language; and this succeeded better than the finest ornaments.

'She is an english woman!' observed some persons who were in the shop at the time; and presently it was an english lady, whom every body followed and admired; she played her part to a wonder, and promenaded the meadow as if she had been the queen of the fair.

'You see,' said Friedleben, 'what value should be set on the applause of the multitude, and upon what their admiration is founded—a few words of a foreign language!'

'It is the wisdom of a country town,' remarked Charles.

'My dear friend,' rejoined Friedleben, 'mankind resemble each other every where: what is new and rare, always excites their admiration. I blush to think with what means I have often succeeded: there, with a rich solitaire on my finger; here, with a recommendation to an ambassador; another time with a well-lined pocket-book, or by a timely description of the Escurial, or of Versailles, and all that never intimated that I was an honest man.'

We sat down under some willows, and continued to speak in english, to please Mina, of the world in general, of which we had an abridgment under our eyes.—Friedleben quitted us for a few moments; then came back, and related to us how he had been in a tent where they were playing at faro. He gave us such a description of the passions exhibited on the countenances of the gamesters,

that we felt some curiosity to see the spectacle. We entered a low dark tent; and scarcely were we within side, when Mina came to me, pale and trembling, and said to me, in a wild voice——

'It is he—it is he!—father, in the name of heaven, speak to him—take him out of this den!'

'Who?' cried I, startled at the trouble in which I beheld her.

She made me approach the table where they were playing.—'See there!'—cried she, showing me one of the most desperate gamblers.—It was Salzmann. His face was pale and lengthened; his inflamed eyes followed each card, and he appeared to be losing fast. A man who stood behind him said to him——

'You are in ill luck, sir; do not play any more.'

'I will play!' replied he, peevishly; 'I am—I will be unhappy!'

And he laid down a handful of gold upon his card.

'In the name of heaven, speak to him!' said Mina in my ear.

'When he quits the table,' replied I, 'I promise you I will speak to him.'

'No, no, instantly.'

At the same time approaching the table, she tapped him on the shoulder—'dear Salzmon!' cried she.

He turned round impatiently; but recollecting her at once, he exclaimed, with an affected tranquillity——

'Ah! it is you miss Mina!'

'I conjure you,' cried she, 'let me speak two words to you this instant!'

He laid down his cards, and went out along with her. I followed, but soon lost sight of them among the trees. When Mina returned, she was alone, and grasped my hand with an earnestness that alarmed me.

'I believe, I hope he is saved. And it is I who shall have saved him!' repeated she with transport, clasping her hands, and raising her eyes to heaven; 'then it is equal to me at what price, and——he may know how much I suffer—how truly wretched I am!'

'What sayest thou, my child?' cried I with anxiety; 'how! thou wretched?—thou lovest him, Mina?'

She looked at me stedfastly, as if to penetrate my thoughts.

'Father, have I said any thing?'

'Yes, my dear child, I have read thy heart.'

She threw herself on my neck, and rising up presently after, remained some instants motionless, put her hand on her eyes, and cried, in a tremulous voice——

'You will despise me!—he too will despise me!'

She pronounced these words with such an altered tone that I was painfully affected. I was about to tell her how shameful it was for a young girl to love, without being addressed by the man to whom she attached herself; but in the state I beheld her, it was impossible for me to say a single word to her that seemed like a reproach.

'Mina,' said I to her, tenderly, 'I pity thee from my soul; and even were it true that thou hadst to blush for the sentiment thou feelest, thou shouldst also be proud of the fortitude with which thou hast concealed it so long.'

She hid her face with her hands.

'What must he think of me?' cried she; 'he knows I love him, and that it was love occasioned my illness!—"life is a burden to me!" cried he; "love, virtue—what use have all those chimeras been to me?"—oh my father! and it is Salzman who no longer believes in love or vir-

me!—it is Salzman whom despair leads astray!—that he will despise me:—it was I who first spoke to him of my love. I wanted——I wanted to prove to him that love and virtue are not chimæras.—Come, let us quit this place, my father!—he must not see me again: no, I will not see him—I would die of shame.'

At the moment Salzman appeared. He was coming out of the grove with his arms folded, and the look of a man who was musing profoundly. Mina took me eagerly by the arm, and dragged me behind the booths.—We returned to our inn, and found the tap-room empty: she sat down in a corner, leaning her head upon her hand; then suddenly starting up came over to me, and said—

'I beseech you, my dear father, in pity do not let my mother know what has happened. Oh do not tell her! let me at least look up to my mother without blushing—it is the only favor I have to beg of you.'

I promised to her solemnly.

'As for him,' added she, 'do you not think he will be silent upon the shame of an unhappy girl, whose secret has been torn from her by the despair in which she saw him plunged.'

'I am convinced of it, my love; Salzman is honorable, and has a friendship for thee,' said I, in order to comfort her; for her wild and gloomy look caused me a piercing uneasiness.

'You know my secret, and he knows it too;—never can I dare to lift my eyes before him, no more than before you. And yet, dear good father, indulgent friend of your poor Mina, you will not have an ill opinion of her because she loves; nor will heaven neither—for it is that has given me a heart to love.'

'Yes, certainly, my child, it is that has given thee a heart; but thy love is the fruit of a moment of forgetfulness,—of the imprudence incidental to thy age. Let us not seek to excuse our weaknesses by accusing heaven with them.'

'But I feel that my soul is pure and innocent.'

'Well, my dear, thou wilt be the better disposed to be on thy guard against the weaknesses of thy heart, and allow for the imperfections of others.'

She kissed my hand.

'You shall not hear another sigh from me, dear father; if I am not happy, I will at least be good and virtuous.'

Tears rushed into my eyes.

'May heaven bless thee as I bless thee, dear innocent Mina!'

Never have I with more tenderness pressed any of my children to my heart, after a good action, than I did Mina at the moment she rose so nobly from her weakness. Elizabeth might have said again, were she present—'oh, how happy must the Almighty be in the power of pardoning his children!'—however, I reproach myself still at this moment, for having had the insensibility to ask her then some account of the birth and progress of this sentiment in her heart:—it was painfully humiliating. She blushed, but consented at once; and begged me to go with her into the little garden belonging to the house, where she related to me all the reader already knows.—I desired then to know what she had said to Salzman.

The poor young man's despair had so far disordered herself, that she could give me but a very imperfect account of their conversation. All I could draw from it was, that she had at first spoken to him with force and sentiment about the vicious habits into which he let himself be hurried; that having come to a grove of willows at the end of the meadow, he threw himself on his knees before her, and gave her his word that he would refrain from wine and gaming. This promise, his attitude, and grief had such an effect upon Mina, that, by an involuntary movement, she fell into his arms in striving to raise him, and made him the avowal of her tenderness.

'And he, what did he reply?'

'He!' cried she, with the accent of affright; 'ah my father! would I have spoken if I could have heard him? —no; I heard nothing—I know not what he told me:— he pressed me to his bosom—I felt the impression of his lips!——oh my father! I shudder with confusion to have thus exposed myself to his pity—perhaps to his contempt!——ah! yes, contempt I am sure!'

She covered her burning face with her hands, walking by my side with a precipitate step.

'No, no, my child, thy fears are not justly founded—not contempt surely; it is not what his transport expressed; thy avowal must have affected him violently—thou art young—thou art Elizabeth's sister. I do not say it is love he feels for you; but it is what may become it.'

In continuing my questions, it seemed to me in effect that Salzman, animated by all that had preceded this avowal, had too tenderly expressed his gratitude for a sentiment he did not yet partake.——I was not well resolved what I should say; I determined, therefore, to be silent, and to wait the consequences with patience. In the bottom of my heart I preserved the hope that Salzman might still become my son.

When we returned to the inn, we found Friedleben and Charles expecting us; and the landlord offered us a little room, in which he proposed to spread some fresh straw. Mina accepted it eagerly, hoping to pass the night alone; or at least remote from the noise of those who were drinking. I went with my two children to the little room, Mina lay down in one corner, and Charles stretched himself on the other side.

When I thought them asleep, I went out to join Friedleben, who staid below in the landlord's parlor; but the drinkers were making such a noise, that we could not stand it long, so I proposed going up to the closet, where

my children were reposing. We sat down on a little form. Mina was opposite us, and I saw, with pleasure, that she was in a sweet slumber. Friedleben looked at her a long while with a smile of satisfaction.

'Thus sleeps innocence,' observed he to me, in a low voice; 'I do not recollect what french author has said—'it is upon the physiognomy of a sleeping man that the justest observation are to be made.'—I was struck with this reflection; and when I read it for the first time, being then but a young hotbrain, I drew myself into twenty scrapes, by going with a dark lantern to make my observations upon people in bed. The result of all my researches was, that the greater part of mankind have an expression of simplicity and good-nature in sleeping which they have not always when awake; unless their sleep be disturbed, which is always a sign of some disorder physical or moral. I have often thought that a man should see his enemy asleep, which would reconcile him to features that no longer show the traces of envy, hatred, or contempt. The man who is not decidedly wicked, resumes, when asleep, the character of innocence and simplicity of his early days. Look how your Mina smiles!—may heaven preserve her the calm which her heart enjoys!'

'May heaven restore it her!' cried I, involuntarily.

Friedleben regarded me with an astonished air. I determined, since this word had escaped me, to recount to him all that had happened to my daughter. I had reason to be certain of his discretion; he loved my children, and I wanted the advice of an experienced man.

'She loves without hope!' cried he, amazed at what he heard, 'and yet she has been so cheerful on the way, and I have always seen her so serene.'

'Ah!' rejoined I, 'after having suffered so long, her heart reposed upon the consoling idea that the man she loved would not be her brother-in-law,—her sister's hus-

band: she knew very well that he could not come to our house while Elizabeth staid there, and she tranquilly supported a short absence. When the mind is oppressed by misfortune, the least glimmer of hope revives and sustains it.'

'And in misfortune itself,' added Friedleben, 'beneficent nature has not permitted the anguish of grief to be continual; the tranquil moments of the unhappy surpass their moments of sorrow by a great deal:—the day glides amid hopes, labor, the cares of life, and little occasional joys; and often the night bestows a sweet sleep and consoling dreams. See what an angelic smile is upon the lips of your unfortunate Mina.—Poor girl!' exclaimed he, with an air of tenderness; 'excellent, charming girl, how can it be that thou art not beloved?——but there is nothing to be done at the moment. She is right—she must not see him for the present.——She will see him again, I will answer for it, or he does not deserve her consideration; and in that case be assured her love will vanish. You are a happy father; and your children too must be happy, from their excellent disposition.'

We fell asleep expressing our wishes for my children's happiness; and when we awoke, the sun had been a long time above the horizon.

CHAP. IX.

The return.

When Mina arose from her straw, I perceived that the *giver of good*—sleep, had calmed her grief, and revived her hopes.—On our way, I observed her turning her head every moment, and yet nobody followed us; but when we drew nearer home, she became more tranquil and serious; and when we arrived, the joy of the children and her mother's caresses brought her to her natural ease. The afternoon and evening were taken up with endless descriptions: my wife wanted to know every thing, down to the smallest particulars, respecting Elizabeth's dwelling. We did not mind to speak to her about the holes in the wall, or the crevices in the roof; but entertained her a long time about the pretty court-yard, with the fine lime-tree in the middle, and the elegant little parlor; so that she had only the roses without the thorns.

Next morning, at breakfast, the questions and descriptions recommenced. Charles sketched, as well as he could, a little plan of Wahlen's house, of which his mother understood nothing, but which she looked at a long while, smiling with complaisance. She would then have a minute detail of our journey, going and coming, which was recounted to her; with the exception, however, of our meeting with Salzman, whose name was not pronounced. Each then returned to their usual occupations, and Friedleben took leave of us, promising to come again.

Our esteem and friendship for this man augmented every day, although he did not show us the least confi-

dence. We knew nothing of him but the name; we were even ignorant of where he lived. Mina would have it that he was extremely rich; we could only suspect it. She was of opinion, also, that he had neither wife nor children, although he had positively asserted the contrary the day of Elizabeth's wedding.

In fine, all those circumstances were a mystery to us. But his heart was not: it unfolded itself overflowing with virtues, and with affection for all my family. Sometimes, indeed, he seemed too satirical; but then he was a man, and a friend whom heaven appeared to have sent to replace our good uncle Frederic: and when the cares of the future hung upon my heart, I said to myself—I have Friedleben!'—and I became more at ease. He had not at any time said, however, that he would come to our assistance in case of need; but we relied upon it as firmly as if he had given us the strongest assurances of it.

The first time we saw him after the present of the pearls, my wife told him the use Minette had made of them. He shook his head in token of approbation, stretched out his hand to Mina, and did not say a word. I related to him the sentimental scenes that had been the consequence of it: he observed silence still, but looked upon us all with an air of tenderness.

Happiness took up her residence again under our roof; but she had changed her form; it was no longer a smiling playful divinity, decked with a crown of roses, singing, dancing, and strewing flowers on every surrounding object; but calm and tranquil, bearing in her hand the olive of peace, and smiling with gentleness on all about her.

We were at peace with ourselves;—what can man desire more?

CHAP. X.

Elizabeth and Mina.

WHAT shall we make of Charles?—this was for some time one of our principal objects of inquietude: the money we had left, and the row of pearls, would hardly suffice to maintain him a year at the university.

Another solicitude soon came to trouble us: we found expressions and phrases in Elizabeth's letters which made us all uneasy. Mina alone knew what was the reality, as she received private letters from her sister which she did not show us; but at last she found herself under the necessity of explaining the affair.

Friedleben was in the right. Wahlen loved his wife most passionately; but this love, and the habit to which he was accustomed of living in a certain style, drew him into expenses that exceeded his means. As soon as he received any money, he laid out a part of what was not immediately necessary, in buying some articles of dress for his wife, or some pretty piece of furniture that he thought would give her pleasure; and then was often obliged to borrow, to keep his family from starving. When Elizabeth grew afflicted at this, he consoled her by the hope of increasing his income, or receiving assistance from his paternal uncle.

This is what Mina related to us: she was penetrated with grief, and read us some passages of her sister's letters; in one of which she said——

'There are, dear Mina, in an obscure and too often neglected class of men, some minds extremely noble and generous. The old man you saw at our house, for instance, the old valet, denies himself also the most necessary things, in order to dress himself decently; because he knows that it pleases his master to see him so. This good man receives monthly wages, which are, as my husband says, too little for him, but nevertheless too much for our means. Imagine, dear Mina, what I felt when the good old man, at the end of two months, brought me his money secretly, telling me with a timid voice—'keep that for me I beg you, my lady baroness; I may, perhaps, have occasion for it some years hence.' When I had taken it, and locked it up, he added, hesitating—'it is very little, my lady; but I hope my lord will do better in time, and then you may return it to me; at present I do not want it, and if you should have occasion to make use of it—' tears burst into my eyes, and he wept too. His emotions and expressions touched me to the soul—it was impossible to misconceive the excellence of his heart. You cannot comprehend what a painful sentiment affected me every time he called me, 'my lady baroness' in this conversation: had he called me Elizabeth, and I dared to embrace him, and shed my tears upon his bosom, I should have been somewhat relieved, I stretched my hand, saying—'yes, my good friend, we both love our Wahlen!'

'Dear Mina, you do not imagine how much I suffer every instant, from the contrast between our real misery, and the sort of ostentation that Wahlen requires; and how painful it is to me to hide from him the effect it produces upon me. Alas! it is only for me—only to adorn your Elizabeth, or procure her some enjoyment, that he runs into various expenses: could I deprive him of that pleasure by my sad morality? no; I accept his gifts—I wear them; and at night, while he sleeps, get up softly, and work to regain what they have cost.

'I have spoken to him cautiously, putting questions to him concerning his projects. He replied with vague hopes upon the future, and his uncle's fortune. Ah! why not live comformably to our actual situation? it is not for us to think of prosperity to come. Behold, dear Mina, the only cloud that in the least troubles the serenity of our life. I should not complain, so long as there is none between my husband and me, and I possess his heart: and it is mine most sincerely. Am I not then the happiest of women?'

Mina's tears almost hindered her from reading: our's prevented us from hearing. She read us again another very affecting passage, which related to Elizabeth's hope of soon being a mother.

Our emotion was excessive: my wife rose up eagerly; I thought she was going to fall upon her knees, but she ran to the drawer, and took out the money that remained after the sale of the pearls. My children cried with joy; I cast a look of compassion upon Charles, which my wife perceiving, laid the money down upon the table in a kind of incertitude. Observing that I kept silence, she began to count it slowly, and divide it into two parts.

'It will be very little,' said she, sighing.

'Why not all, mother?' cried Charles.

'Because it was intended for thee, my child,' replied she.

'Send it all to our Elizabeth,' said I; 'her wants are the most urgent: let us trust in providence—it will not abandon our son.'

Augusta shook her head, and cried——

'No, no, that would not be just; it belongs to Charles.'

'Ah my dear mother! why will you drive me so unfeelingly from your house?'

'Drive thee!' exclaimed she, with an astonished look.

'Could I have one minute's peace in it, if I conceived myself to be the cause of not coming to the relief of my sister? I would rather expose myself to die with hunger and misery. Elizabeth must have all this money, my mother; or I quit the house instantly.'

He pronounced these words with a firmness and fire which did not resemble his customary philosophy. My wife, alarmed at the idea of his leaving us, made no more objections and consented to his demand.

It was next debated how we could send this money to Elizabeth, without her perceiving that we had read her letters to her sister. My wife was of opinion that we should not let her be ignorant that she owed it to our attachment, and her brother's friendship.

'She will not accept it then,' said Mina. 'I know her.'

'How!' cried my wife, indignantly, 'she accepts money from a servant, and would not from us?'

'Do not speak so of our Elizabeth's benefactor,' cried I; 'his soul is noble and generous, like our daughter's. The good old man who, calling my daughter my lady baroness, and proving his respect in his way, gives her all he is worth, and gives her much more than money—the tears of sensibility! I consider him so little as a servant, that I am sorry my daughter did not embrace him, notwithstanding the title he gave her. I would certainly do so, were he here.'

'And I also,' said my wife, whose indignation suddenly changed into tenderness, 'I would embrace him myself, to repair the wrong I was just now guilty of;—but

it is not because my daughter accepts his money that I am provoked, but to think she would refuse ours.'

'It is possible she may take it,' said Mina; 'but what I am very sure of is, that she will complain no more, and I shall die with uneasiness.'

This reflection struck us, and we sought, therefore, to hit upon some way of sending her the money. We imagined it might do to suppose a lottery—a ticket that Friedleben had given to Mina—a prize of six hundred crowns.

'And that,' said Charles, 'will leave us an excuse to send her more at another time.'

We all sighed.—'What more have we to give her?—at most but the row of pearls, which may be worth about sixty crowns.'

Charles was eager to set off immediately with the money. Mina wrote the letter, accompanied her brother pretty far, and returned to the house perfectly satisfied.

Elizabeth believed the fable of the lottery, and thanked us with that sensibility which breathed in every thing she expressed; and her letter to Mina was really pathetic. The money we sent her was of great use; but we learned with grief that, although the sum was pretty considerable, yet it had been all, except a mere trifle, expended in paying urgent debts. Elizabeth economized the little that remained with the greatest frugality, but every letter redoubled our inquietudes; she was approaching the moment of her lying in, and her pecuniary embarrassments increased. Wahlen had laid out the rest of the money, and what was left of the last harvest, in buying a fine cradle highly ornamented, and a quantity of embroidered baby linen.

Might not Elizabeth then hope for some assistance from us, in the notion that the money we had sent her was part of a prize of six hundred crowns?—if we did nothing for her now, what would she think?—at her broth-

er and sister's request the pearls were sold, and we sent her the amount in old pieces, as a present for the child. She invited us all to the christening, and I intended to send Mina at least, as soon as we should hear of her delivery; when an event occurred that deranged all our projects.

A letter, containing money, was brought for Mina. She turned pale as she broke the seal, and looking round on us all with an air of apprehension.

'From Wahlen?' demanded I, trembling.

'No,' replied she, taking courage.—'Pardon me, dear father, if I have taken a determination without your knowledge; but I feared your prohibition. I am governess to the daughters of the count of Herbroug.'

My wife desired to know what a governess was. I explained it therefore, exaggerating the duties and obligations a little, to make Mina reflect, which made my wife think it shameful for her daughter to embrace such a servile vocation; and I found it somewhat difficult, in consequence, to persuade her that a governess was not a servant.

I addressed myself then to Mina.

'My dear daughter,' said I to her with an afflicted voice, 'I had hoped that thou wouldst quit the house of thy father only to enter that of a spouse. Thou knowest not the world;—thy slightest faults will be remarked, in order to find excuses for overlooking thy good qualities. Here thou art treated with indulgence and love: there, thou wilt be very lucky if they treat thee merely with cold politeness. It is pleasing, it is honorable, thou wilt tell me, to form youth;—I grant it; but do not think they will entrust thee with the care of forming the hearts of thy pupils. Thy mother was not altogether wrong: thou wilt be, in fact, but the first domestic in the noble family, and, perhaps, the worst liked, because thou wilt not choose to be treated as such. Do not count upon the parents'

gratitude: although thou do for them, in educating their children, more than they can do for thee, thou art to be paid for thy trouble. Wages extinguish the idea of gratitude, and place thee in the class of those who serve merely for hire.'

'I beseech thee, my child,' cried her mother, 'do not give me the vexation of seeing thee go to service, while we have bread to give thee!'

Mina's tears flowed.

'Ah! if it only regarded myself, I need have no occasion to cast myself upon a world which I well know is not made for my heart; but Elizabeth, my dear mother, the best of your children, is not happy—I may contribute to lighten her cares; and should I neglect it?'

'How dost thou mean?' demanded my wife.

'I am to receive a hundred crowns salary, and perhaps some presents. I shall have some hours to myself, and can then work at making my dress. I will send Elizabeth what I can spare, like the old valet, under pretext of keeping my money for me. Dear sister, how much do I love thee!—I quit, for thy sake, the paternal roof, and the only happiness of my life!'

In pronouncing these last words her eyes sparkled, and I comprehended.—'I quit the neighborhood of Salzman!' said her heart.

'My beloved Mina,' said I, with the sentiment of admiration with which she inspired me, 'it is doubtless some beneficent angel that has suggested this idea to thee. —Thou wilt not forget us amid the distractions of the great world, into which thou art about to enter; but, perhaps, thou mayest forget thy sorrows, and regain thy tranquillity.'

She smiled sadly; and to turn the conversation, gave me the letter she had just received. It was from mrs. Salzberg, uncle Frederic's sister, with whom Mina had

kept up a correspondence, and who had procured her this place.

This letter did not at all diminish our uneasiness. Herbroug house, said mrs. Salzberg, was one of the most brilliant in Berlin, and offered every thing that was most likely to seduce a young heart: the greatest liberty prevailed in it. The countess, who had been attached to the court as a maid of honor, was young and handsome, and very fond of pleasure; and the count passed for one of the most seducing men at Berlin.

I said nothing on receiving this letter; but the reflections it excited in me were of a very painful nature. My wife read it next, and immediately cried out—

'No, it is impossible for me to let my child enter that house.'

I let her say every thing she pleased on that head, and even laid a stress upon her motives of inquietude.

'Ah!' cried Mina, I should be very little worthy that tender solicitude, and of being your daughter if your fears were justly founded.'

'I doubt my child, that thou knowest the extent of our motives of apprehension.'

'I know them,' replied she, blushing, 'My dear mother, you have nothing to fear from me.'

'Yes, thou knowest them,' observed I; 'but dost thou know the seduction of the world?'

'I know that also, father.'

She rose up and went to her chamber, and returned holding a folio bible-case in her hand, which she opened, and, to our great astonishment, took out several small volumes.

'Look at that;' said she, it is an english novel—it is Clarissa.'

My wife wrung her hands with affright at seeing another novel in her daughter's hands.

'Oh! that is too bad,' cried she, 'to make a romance of the bible!'

'Alas! my dear friend, it is only what is done too often;—it is not Mina alone who is guilty of that; and it may be excused when it is only the bible-case.'

'All you could tell me of the dangers of the world,' rejoined my daughter, 'this book has taught me. A demon, under the form of a man, seduces an angel in it.—Read it, and you will be convinced that I have nothing to fear at present.'

'Nothing to fear, Mina?—a demon, thou sayest, succeeds in seducing an angel; and thou—thou art infallible!—dost thou then think thyself better than an angel?'

'No, not better; but better advised. Had Clarissa read such a book as that, never would a demon have accomplished her ruin.'

'Dost thou not think she read enough of the kind?—and tell me, what made her fall?'

'Love, father!'

'Good God, Mina!' cried my wife; 'and what hast thou to set thee above the effects of that terrible passion?'

'That passion itself,' replied she, bursting into tears, and throwing herself into her mother's arms; 'I love—I shall love eternally! that is my safeguard! ask my father whom and how I love!' and she went out of the room.

My wife turned pale, and looked at me with anguish. I then recounted to her what I knew of Mina's love. She could not comprehend how a young girl could love a man who had not formally addressed her. She inveighed against all novels, and accused our acquaintance with uncle Frederic, with having been the cause of all our misfortunes. Not being able to attribute Elizabeth's love to novel reading, since she had never read any, she only recollected with the more bitterness that it was at poor Frederic's she had first seen Wahlen, and that it was he who brought him to our house.

After having long disputed about love, I began to look over Clarissa, and, among the first pages, lit upon some reflections which I read aloud to my wife; then continuing to read to myself, I could not help exclaiming, from time to time—'how true that is!—how admirable, &c.'

Curiosity took possession of my wife: she took up the book in her turn, and read till midnight; and I saw by her looks that she was very much taken with it. Next day I surprised her at it several times.

'Augusta,' cried I, 'acknowledge that such a book as that is not poison.'

'Mina is right,' cried she at last; 'if all novels were like this one, they would render those who read them better.'

After having read it through, we found ourselves less disposed than ever to let her go; but she was inflexible: her determination was so strong, that we were in a manner forced to comply. The sorrowful day of her departure at length arrived; we could not tear ourselves from the dear girl's arms.

'Clarissa!' exclaimed I, at the moment we separated.

'Clarissa!' cried her mother, at the same instant.

Mina turned round, and fell upon her knees.

'That name,' said she, 'will be to me as my tutelary angel!—that name, and—and—my hopeless love!'

She hurried from our arms, and got into the carriage which was to convey her to Berlin.

CHAP. XI.

My son.

Mina left a great void in our house: in spite of the secret uneasiness of her heart, it was she who kept us alive. She had more strength of mind than might have been expected from her sex and age: in all our disappointments it was she that gave us courage, by her vivacity and the resources of her genius. She was extremely useful to us also, by the talent she possessed of knowing how to find use for every thing; and of applying to domestic purposes a thousand old things, which she made to answer as well as new.

From the day of her departure, Charles began to speak to us about his apprehensions for the future, and his vexation to be, at his age, without any particular profession, or even the hope of having one. We had nothing to say to him to console him; we were more afflicted at it than he. He should go through a regular course of studies; but how could we maintain him at the university, when we could but barely provide for our family subsistence?

'Is it absolutely necessary for him to study?' said Friedleben, who had come to see us a few days after Mina's departure;—to say the truth, I had confided our inquietudes to him, in the hope that he would come forward to our assistance; 'or is it only that he is tired of the life he leads here?'

'All I could teach him,' replied I, 'he knows already; and he does nothing here but waste his time and youth.'

'Well, why should he stay here then? you cannot

send him to the university: he is too old to commence a commercial apprenticeship. I see no necessity for your keeping him any longer here, where he can do nothing; let him try his fortune in the world.'

My wife was, as well as myself, extremely shocked at this proposal: to let him run the world over without design—without a fixed intention.

'No,' cried she, 'were I forced to sell my clothes and every thing I have left, to maintain him, I would not let him go as you mention. Indeed, sir, that advice is not like a friend; what, let my son set out like a vagabond! no, never!'

'It is nothing but the words that frighten you,' said Friedleben. 'He cannot go to study you allow: is it not then wrong in you to hinder the young man from seeking a fortune in the world, which he can never find here? has he nothing to do but learn languages? it is good to know some, but that should not be his only object; let him learn a science which is always useful—the mathematics. I undertake to procure him books; and in a little time, when he shall know something more than how to construe classic authors, he may boldly push his fortune in the world: with his appearance and good sense I promise him success.'

This proposal dissipated all our hopes: our favorite project for this beloved boy was, that he might one day replace me, or obtain a better place in the ecclesiastical career.

Friedleben spoke in the same strain to the young man, who, contrary to my expectation, embraced the project with avidity.

'With the mathematics,' said Friedleben to him, 'you will have a thousand ways of getting employment: you can turn yourself at will to architecture, surveying, engineering, or the artillery.'

'The artillery?' cried Charles, with an eagerness

that gave me pain; but I held my tongue, in order not to awaken Augusta's apprehensions, who, being wife and daughter to an ecclesiastic, had the strongest prejudices against the trade of a soldier.

Charles accompanied Friedleben to the city, and brought back several books. He laid himself down seriously to the study of the mathematics, under the direction of our friend, who astonished me by the knowledge I saw him display. In a few days he quitted us, and took with him my second son, whom he wanted to place under an apothecary. Thus did we find ourselves deprived of three children; and foresaw the approaching departure of Charles, who labored with ardor to arrive at the point of being able to realize Friedleben's views; and indeed he made rapid progress in his new studies.

Friedleben, who now came very often to see us, was every day more enigmatical. Of all my children, it was Charles he appeared to love most, and yet he did very little for him. We could not doubt but he was very rich —he betrayed himself in that respect, in spite of all his caution; and yet he only lent Charles the most necessary books, and gave him nothing but an old case of mathematical instruments, that required to be mended before he could make use of it.

In a very little time Charles drew so well, that Friedleben was highly pleased with him, and took him along with him sometimes, when he returned to town, in order to show him different objects, of which otherwise he could give him but an imperfect idea.

These little journies helped Charles in his studies; but he did not perceive in Friedleben's manner of living, the least trace of that wealth we supposed he possessed: nothing was plainer than his lodgings; and when he returned to our frugal table, he found that was at least as good as Friedleben's.

'He must be a miser,' said my wife to me once.

'But the pearls he gave thee!' replied I.

In short, this man was an impenetrable enigma for us; we hardly knew more about him than the first day when chance directed him to our house. When I reminded him sometimes of what he had mentioned that day concerning his numerous family, and the daughter he was going to marry, he turned off the discourse, or jested in such a manner as to make us presume that Mina was right in saying he had none. What was very clear was, that he was attached to us: he seemed to take delight in our company, and partook of our homely fare without ever appearing to desire any thing more. We were persuaded that, on a real occasion, he would not refuse us his assistance; and that he would even take us all home, if he knew us to be in distress. But in our actual position he did not look upon us to be unhappy; and often, when he was seated in the midst of us at our frugal repast, would he cry out——

'You are a happy father, dear Bemrode, and a happy husband; yes, you are truly happy.'

However, to the inquietudes which the uncertain prospects of my son gave me, was joined that which I experienced from the remarkable change that was affected in all his conduct. It was no longer the cold philosopher we had seen seeking the why and the how of every thing; a new soul seemed to animate him. With the studies which he pursued assiduously, he gave himself secretly to poetry; and what displeased me most was, that it was love he usually sung in his verses.

The term Friedleben had fixed for his entrance into the world, appeared much too long to him; he talked to us frequently of the brilliant career open to a young man in the profession of arms, and said that he desired to enter the Prussian artillery. Friedleben did not seem to disapprove this desire. We did not venture to object to it, because we knew of no other project to substitute in its place; however, we were not without hopes that Friedleben might make him alter his idea, as he did not allow him to apply himself altogether to military studies.

Two years had elapsed since Mina left our house. We had news from her often, either directly or through her sister, with whom she kept up a regular correspondence. She appeared to be pleased with her condition, and had acquired esteem and consideration by her attention in fulfilling all her duties.

Elizabeth was already mother of two children, a girl and a boy; she too was struggling against poverty; but her husband loved her: and Mina sent her regularly the amount of her salary, which she accepted as a loan, and contributed to support her house.

Our good and generous Mina sent us also little presents from time to time, and gave us hopes, that, perhaps, Charles might be placed through count Herbroug's interest. We begged him, therefore, to study theology, and Friedleben, did not oppose it.

My wife was happy in the expectation of having one of her sons a clergyman, and consented, without difficulty, to send Wilhelm, our youngest, as apprentice to his uncle, the paper-manufacturer.

CHAP. XII.

A misfortune.

We were one evening conversing quietly together upon our hopes.

'Dost thou not think, my dear Augusta,' said I, 'that

we have given ourselves gratuitously a great deal of uneasiness; and should we not rather thank heaven for all the happiness it has allotted us? was not Friedleben right in saying that money is not the best means of accomplishing every thing? doubtless a purse of ducats would have spared us a great deal of trouble; but is it not better that it is our own exertions, and mutual attachment for one another, which has drawn us out of difficulty? fate has separated a part of our children, but we will not be the less united. Mina is happy in being able to assist her sister, and gives hopes to her brother; would she have had the opportunity of developing her virtues and her tender affection for us, if we had not been poor.

My wife coincided with my ideas.

'Thou art right,' said she to me; 'and if I could see my Charles a minister, like thee, and settled near us, I would no longer complain of any thing.'

At that instant somebody rapped at the door, and we saw an officer of the electorial troops come in. My wife went out the moment she perceived a uniform.

'I have some business with you,' said the officer to me, in a mild voice, 'and a business that gives me pain, mr. Pastor.'

This salute made me tremble.

'How?' cried I, anxiously.

'Your eldest, son sir, wants to go into the service of Prussia. When his intention is to serve, his country has the first rights upon him, and I come to claim them.'

I remained thunderstruck, without being able to reply. I took the officer by the hand and pressed it, endeavoring to recover my breath.

'Your son,' continued he, 'has surely some learning?—he may rise in time; and if, as I hope, he be not entirely corrupted; he may——'

'Corrupted!' cried I, with astonishment; 'my son is the joy and pride of his parents;—he does not want to be a soldier.'

The officer took a paper out of his pocket.

'Your name is Bemrode, is it not?—your son's name is Charles; he is five feet eight inches; he wishes to enter the prussian service——I beg you do not strive to deny what we are sure of.'

'Yes,' returned I, 'he had a mind to do so, because we were not rich enough to enable him to continue his studies; but we have other expectations at present, and you would not have the cruelty to destroy them. Ah! sir, it is upon this son that the hopes of all my family repose.'

'Ah!' cried he, 'that is in truth the language of a father; but your son is a young libertine, that is what we are sure of.'

At that moment Charles entered the room.

'Is that he?' demanded the officer, examining him with attention.

My son saluted him.

'But what ails you, dear father?' said he to me! 'you look quite unhappy.'

'That gentleman,' answered I, 'is come to take thee away;—he pretends that thou art a libertine!'

Charles smiled, and that smile alone was sufficient to repel the calumny—it was the smile of innocence. The officer examined Charles, and showed his order. My son was very much startled.

'Yes,' said he, after some minutes silence, 'I did, I acknowledge, wish to become a soldier; not, as you suppose, from libertinism, but because——why should I not say it—because I feel myself made to honor the profession.'

'Well then, young man,' cried the officer, presenting him his hand, 'we are agreed.'

'Not entirely, sir,' said my son, looking at me; 'I want still the consent of my father. I have always sacrificed my inclinations to his, and am still ready to make him this sacrifice.'

The officer spoke to him some time about his studies, and the military art, and became every instant more mild and tractable. I began to hope. Charles went for his drawings and mathematical exercises, which the officer examined with evident pleasure, and whispered him something in the ear. At last he declared to us that he was very sorry for being under the necessity of executing his orders, which were very posititive, and required him to take my son along with him.

'You must certainly have some enemy, mr. Pastor,' said he; 'for we have been assured that your son was an abandoned fellow, and wanted to inlist in the prussian service from despair.'

'Merciful God!' exclaimed I; 'indeed, sir, I do not know that I have an enemy in the world.'

'Not you, father,' said Charles. 'but I;—I have one that I know. Come, since I must go——but what shall we say to my mother?'

I shuddered at the thought of her despair.

'Ah! thy mother—thy mother!' cried I, wringing my hands.

Charles turned to the officer.

'You see, sir,' said he, 'how we love one another. I am disposed, I assure you, to obey your orders;—I even avow that I shall be only following my own inclination; but I have a mother, and the tenderest of mothers.—Ah! sir, is it not possible for you to leave me here?'

'It is absolutely impossible,' said the officer, compassionately; 'I have the most explicit orders to take you wherever I shall find you.'

'Well then, sir, since it must be so, will you here, before my father, my good dear father, whom I afflict in

spite of myself, I dare say it, for the first time in my life; will you have the goodness to repeat the promise you have been pleased to make me?'

The officer pressed him to his bosom, and said, feelingly—

'Yes, good young man, I will serve thee instead of a father; and thou shalt enter into the artillery, and not as a common soldier. I will watch over thee as if thou wert my son.'

He told me then, in a few words, what he meant to do.

I recovered some little hopes, but my wife!—the idea of her grief made me distracted. We agreed that we should hide what had happened from her, and tell her that Charles had got a place as a secretary.

We were all three shaking hands when my wife opened the chamber-door: she was pale as death, and fell, almost swooning, into the arms of her son. Some soldiers having surrounded the house, she asked them what they wanted, and one of them replied, brutally—

'We are coming to take your son to the regiment.'

Poor mother! she wanted to throw herself at the officer's feet;—he would not suffer it, but sent away his men; and it was only then she could listen to us with any degree of calmness. But all our consolations were fruitless. At length we all began to look at each other in silence;—how were we to acquaint her that Charles was to set off in a moment?

'My son,' said I, 'I do not know thy enemy; but I could not wish him to be a witness of the anguish of thy mother, and to suffer as I do.'

My son asked the officer if he might go out for a minute. He consented, giving him his hand, and looking at him stedfastly, and Charles went out.

Before he came in, supper was served up, and the offi-

cer sat down to table with us. I then acquainted Annette that her brother was to go:—we had all tears in our eyes; nobody ate any thing, not even the officer. Charles returned; his countenance was more dejected than before. The officer made him sit down near him, renewed his promises of friendship, promised his mother to watch for his promotion, but did not succeed in assuaging our affliction.

We passed a cruel night. Charles came to us in the morning, equipped for the journey, and we gave him the little money we had: my wife forced him to take a pair of gold earrings which she had laid by. The officer left us the time necessary to take leave of one another; but at length begged us mildly not to detain him longer.

We were at that very instant surprised by the entrance of miss Juliet Schink, in her morning undress: since Mina's departure she used to come sometimes to inquire after her, but never so early. She attempted to smile as she saluted us, but tears escaped from her eyes. Charles took her hand, and raised it to his lips;—he remained some time in that attitude.

'I know all, mr. Pastor,' said she, in a faint voice. 'Are there no means?'

I shook my head, and pressed her hand to thank her for the interest she took in our distress.

'Come,' said Charles, taking his hat, 'I must go;' and he strove to affect some gaiety.

'You leave me thus!' cried Juliet, in a tone that astonished us all. 'Ah Charles! I have no longer any secret to keep—your parents will one day be mine!—receive before them the farewel embraces of your Juliet!'

She held out her arms to him, and their tears mingled together.

'We will meet again!' cried he, tearing himself away from her, 'we will meet again!' and he flew precipitately out of the room. The officer followed him.

My wife went into her chamber to pray God for her son. I continued, looking after him with inexpressible woe; twenty times was I on the point of going out to accompany him; but could I leave my poor Augusta alone with her grief?—'be a man, my son!' cried I from the window.—Alas! I gave him an advice I was far from being able to follow myself; all my firmness forsook me; I forgot that Juliet Schink was there, and how much her noble avowal ought to interest me for her; I left her alone and went to shut myself up in my closet.

Six sorrowful weeks were spent in grief and regret; at the expiration of this time, Friedleben came to see us. My wife went out of the room the moment she saw him enter—without knowing why, she attributed the misfortune of our son to him. He inquired where Charles was, and I related to him what had happened, without dissimulating that we had some idea of the blow having been urged by him.

He listened, without interrupting me, with his eyes cast down: his countenance had not its usual serenity.

'I hope,' said he, when I had done, 'that we may be able to deliver him. Why should I not allow that I am somewhat to blame for that affair, and more than you think?'—he stalked along the room with long strides.—'I am good,' cried he, striking his forehead with vexation; 'why should I have desired to be more?—I should have known to what man exposes himself, when he attempts to pass the bounds of his destination. If I had not the hope of delivering my dear Charles from a situation he does not like, I would never pardon myself for what I have done. You shall know all. Through my stupidity and pride, because I have a little more money than I can spend, I thought I was able to master circumstances at will. I had the folly of wanting to act, with respect to you, the part of divine providence, which comes to our relief at the moment it appears to abandon us.'

'It is for that,' said I, 'that you have remained so long in the dark, and we have known you so little.'

'No,' replied he; 'I have concealed nothing from you that was necessary for you to know. It is not that; but ——you know how I made acquaintance with you: it is not chance that led me to your house; but I came on purpose, and became attached to your family from the first evening I saw you. I am rich—perhaps too rich. I might have enriched you, but I did not think fit; because I saw you were as happy as man can be, and that the least change in your situation might destroy that happiness. I was resolved, however, to come to your assistance, if you should happen to be in want of it. For Elizabeth's wardrobe I gave the pearl necklace to Mina: I knew her heart and was sure of the use she would put it to; when you told me of it, I applauded myself secretly and said—"every thing serves to develope the virtues of these people' —I thought only of the goodness and innocence of your family: I saw nothing but your hearts, and never reflected on the invisible hand that often turns into folly the wisdom of men.'

'I do not comprehend you yet,' said I to him.

'You will comprehend me presently. Wahlen, who interests me more than you think, has an excellent heart: —I soon saw, however, that his head was not so good, and that his vanity, his taste for expense, and confidence in imaginary hopes would prove the misfortune of your Elizabeth. I formed the project of curing him of that vanity, and forcing him to find his happiness in mediocrity, economy, and the simple retired life of the country. This was very well; but to attain that end, and render Elizabeth happy, I committed your happiness and that of your other children. You came forward to Elizabeth's assistance and, to satisfy Wahlen's vanity, gave all you had, even what was set apart for Charles's studies; and Mina, the interesting Mina, took a place as a governess, in order to supply Wahlen's expenses. All that I well knew was insufficient; but I knew, likewise, that none of you could bear to see Elizabeth suffer, so long as you had any thing left. I waited the moment when you would have been completely ruined for Wahlen; then I would

have gone to him, and said—"behold what you have done!—all a respectable family, who were happy before they knew you, are reduced to want and misery through your fault: your brother-in-law, a young man of talents and the noblest sentiments, is obliged to enter a dangerous career, where, from one moment to another, he may be lost to his family, and that because you have foolishly laid out on furniture, clothes, and other useless things, the money destined for his education at college. Your sister-in-law, distinguished by her wit and virtues, and who was the pride and happiness of her family, is obliged to live among strangers to send you the little money she earns, which you spend as carelessly as the rest. They all labor for you—they all make continual sacrifices, and you!—what do you give them in return?—misery!"

'You now perceive what were my projects. It is on that account I gave you no hopes for Charles. I calculated that my plan was also that of providence, and did not calculate that man has not the future at his disposal. After the strong lesson I wanted to give Wahlen, I would have provided for your son; and in the meanwhile, some wicked people have disposed of him. I see at present, with shame and grief, that I have sacrificed you to the desire of correcting Wahlen;—my plan bordered on selfish presumption. I am punished for it; and it is not the first time that has happened to me; but this time I am more culpable than ever.'

On any other occasion, Friedleben's plan would have appeared to me to have been well conceived, because it was founded on the knowledge of mankind; but I was the victim of it myself, and shook my head with disapprobation.

'The poor boy,' cried I, 'he loved you so tenderly!'

This reproach affected him grievously.

'I hope,' said he, 'to be able to repair all still. Where was he taken to?'

Alas! I knew not. Charles had promised to write to us as soon as he knew the place of his destination, yet

we have not heard from him. Friedleben, who had taken his hat to set out, threw it back with vexation, and remained.

The patience with which he bore my wife's taunts and reproaches, reconciled me to him. As soon as Augusta and I were in my chamber, I strove to justify him, and recounted what our friend's plan had been; but my recital, far from producing the desired effect, became his sentence of condemnation.

'What a wicked man!' cried she; 'it is for that then that he has befriended us! and to give Wahlen a lesson, he has done us all the harm he was able.'

'But reflect, my dear, that we had no right to require him to give money to defray Charles' studies.'

'No, we had not; but had he a right to sport with my children's happiness? had he any right to humiliate Wahlen; or to give him a lesson at our expense?'

'Prithee speak lower, Augusta; he sleeps in the next room, and can hear all you say.'

'Well then let him hear me: he will hear the expression of a mother's grief, from whom her children are torn away.'

'Reflect, however, that things might have turned out the same if we had never known Friedleben. He has done us no real injury.'

'Yes, indeed, but he has: it is from him that Charles took a taste for a military life, and without him it would have happened quite differently: we should have had more confidence in God; and that confidence would have enabled us to find resources which we have not thought of, because that man meddled in our affairs, and we relied upon him. We should have sent Charles to Halle, where the count of Herbroug wanted to be useful to him. If all these misfortunes had happened

naturally, by the direct will of God, and for Wahlen's good, I would submit and expect relief from his goodness. But for a man to have treated us in this manner! to want to wield the sceptre of providence! and after having done the harm he might have prevented, to say proudly—'I will repair it!' that, indeed, is what I cannot bear.'

'But, dear Augusta, his intention——'

'Was not upright or pure. It was his pride that put it in his head to think he could direct every thing, and makes him still imagine he can repair the injury he has done us with a handful of gold. Can he ever make up an indemnity for my tears and anguish? when God causes our tears to flow, he knows when he will dry them up; but can man tell when it will be in his power? Friedleben has done by us as the governor of a prince did, who chastised his pupil's companions when the little prince committed a fault: is this just? is it humane?'

I heard a noise in the next room, where Friedleben lay. My wife continued in the same tone, but stopped on hearing a tap at the door. Friedleben put in his head, and said, in a mild voice——

'Good mamma, I have no pillow.'

'No pillow!' cried she, instantly changing the inflection of her voice; 'but how has that happened? I pray you take mine for to-night.'

'With all my heart, since you desire it,' said he.

'Yes, I do desire it,' cried she in a friendly tone.

'Excellent woman,' said he, taking the pillow, 'you wish that head to lie softly which has done you so much mischief, and yet you put a heart that loves you tenderly, upon thorns. But no matter—I have done wrong—scold me, for I deserve it. There have fallen upon this pillow tears of which I was the cause, and I will think of this often with sincere repentance.' Augusta

smiled, and blushed at the same time. 'You are right,' continued Friedleben; 'I imagined I could command fate, and make you contribute to bring about my project; and yet I loved you—my heart was not in fault—it was my head. In giving me this pillow, excellent mother, wish me a good night. Your comparison of the prince's governor was a little severe, but it has struck me.'

'Was it severe?' said my wife; that was not my intention.'

'Yes it was; you have given me a stronger lesson than I intended for Wahlen, but it will be more efficacious. I promise you to deliver Charles; Mina also will soon come back, and we will tell the truth to Wahlen: if he must absolutely be indulged in a little splendor to make him contented, we will endeavor to satisfy him without any person suffering by it.'

My wife, relenting at the hopes he gave her, embraced him, and all was forgotten.

The next day we were all upon good terms, but Friedleben was thoughtful. He made us repeat every thing that occurred at the time of Charles's departure: he appeared struck with the visit of the intendant's daughter, and inquired her character minutely; he wanted also to know the time she usually went to walk. It was very clear that Charles loved her, and was beloved; but we could not comprehend how they had become so intimately acquainted. At bottom, this attachment did not please us in the least, for we neither loved nor esteemed Juliet's parents; and we knew that the intendant would not give his daughter to any man but one that bore a title, nor her mother to any but a man of fortune.

Friedleben scrutinized all the papers Charles left behind him. There was nothing but some scraps and torn fragments of letters to Juliet by which we learned, with terror, that the intendant was apprized of his daughter's inclinations by her governess Goldman.

His letters spoke of the profession of a soldier, and we concluded that the forcing away of my son was an act of this man's vengeance. He had represented Charles as an abandoned wretch, that wanted to enter into a foreign service. From this moment I thought of him only with horror, and could have wished to be far away from a village I inhabited with such a bad man.

'Ah! our Charles is ruined!' cried my wife piteously, 'we shall never see him more, and it is I that am the cause of it. Thou hadst reason to say,' cried she to me, 'that he would never forgive that livery I reproached him with; he revenges himself upon my son.'

Friedleben rose up eagerly.

'Is this man then so powerful that you must tremble before him?' cried he; 'or might not honest people, such as we are, have as much interest as a man of that sort?

'His brother-in-law,' said my wife, 'is an assessor; and his wife's uncle has powerful friends among the government: he is the rich Aulic counsellor C***.'

'I am neither assessor,' cried Fridleben, 'nor Aulic counsellor, neither have I a government secretary for a friend; but I have a heart that knows no fear; if I only knew where Charles is!'

At length we received a letter from him. My boy was well; and the officer who took him away, afforded him his particular protection.

'I am not attached to any regiment yet,' wrote he; 'but I am studying artillery practically, and exercising. I am under many obligations to my protector:—without him I should have been treated with much severity; but I am under many more to our dear Friedleben: as it is by the knowledge of mathematics, for which I am in-

debted to him, that I have attracted the good-will of old general B****, to whose son I give lessons of english and mathematics. My enemies are a little surprised, but have not lost the hope of being able to injure me. I should incontestably have been placed as a private soldier in a regiment of foot, if the old general had not threatened to complain directly to the king. I am soon to leave this; but I do not yet know the place of my destination. My protector's brother wished to keep me near him, but that was refused. Every body tells me I have powerful enemies, but I fear them not: my confidence in God, the moderation in which you have brought me up, and the esteem of the good, are sufficient to encourage me. Do not answer me yet, dear father, as I may be gone, and your letter not reach me.'

Friedleben wanted me, however, to answer it immediately; and wrote himself. Our letters were directed to his friend, and we had an answer some days after. Charles continued still in the same uncertainty.

'If mr. Friedleben be still with you,' wrote he, 'tell him that it will be difficult for me to do what he desires. I have received his bill upon Hamburgh, and been paid the amount. One of the persons who act the spy upon all my actions, saw me, when I presented it at the banker's, so that the circumstance cannot long remain unknown. I accept the benefits of this real friend without blushing, since he insists upon it, and tells me it will make him happy; but if he do desire my happiness, let him permit me to hold to the simplicity to which I am accustomed. I have, laid out a part of the money in clothing myself more decently, and the rest in relieving the families of some of my comrades, who are poorer than myself.'

Tears came into my eyes, and I pressed the hand of Friedleben to my heart.

'What I have sent him was but a trifle,' said he; 'I wished him to take a servant, and to buy horses; for it is by outside appearance that wickedness is easiest kept under. Charles, poor, will be oppressed; Charles, with money, will be respected—it is the way of the world. Those who want to ruin him will be very much surprised when he receives a letter of credit upon Hamburgh for ten thousand crowns, which I have given orders to send him.'

'You alarm me,' cried I; 'have you reflected upon the danger of what you are doing? to put such a sum in the hands of a young man like him!'

'There is no danger with Charles,' replied he; 'I only wanted the affair to make a noise. I am sure that Charles would not use a penny of the money.'

'Dear friend,' rejoined I, shaking my head, 'I am not of your opinion. To brave one's enemy is not the way to appease him, or hinder him from doing us harm. I would rather keep in obscurity, that they might forget us; but to defy them openly—to draw their attention to my son, and give them occasion to inquire how he came by his riches—is not that, at least, imprudent?'

'You are right again,' said Friedleben. 'I shall at last envy you your poverty, and the virtues which, perhaps, are owing to it. My riches only give me pride, and the ambition of domineering. To-morrow we will all go to see Charles; and I hope we shall be able to bring him back.'

CHAP. XIII.

The voyage.

FRIEDLEBEN sent for a coach, and we set out full of hopes. In two days we arrived at Hanover, where, after a day spent in anxious inquiries, Friedleben learned that he was marched to Stade.

'That haughty family,' said he, 'do not think themselves safe so long as Charles breathes the air of the same country as Juliet, especially since they see he is protected. He is promoted to be a non-commissioned officer, and his regiment—is under orders for Madras.'

'Good heavens!' cried I, extending my arms toward my wife: for I dreaded the effect this intelligence would have upon her. To my astonishment she remained undisturbed.

'Madras!' cried she, with very little agitation; 'is that such a bad country then!

I had not resolution enough to tell her that Madras was in the East Indies.

'No, my dear friend,' replied I, 'it is—a very healthy country, according to what they say; but it is much farther than Stade, I believe.'

'Can he not be released?' demanded she. Friedleben shook his head. 'Well, but there is no war at present, and, please God, he will live. I dreamed last night——'

I could not think of letting her tell us her dream; her heart would have derived new hopes from it.

'Dear Augusta,' said I, 'what is a dream?—the misfortune that oppresses us is but too real.'

'Yes, it is a misfortune,' rejoined she; 'but whether he be a soldier at Madras or at Stade, is it not the same thing?—how far may it be from this to Madras?'

'I do not know exactly,' answered we both at the same instant.

We could not keep her ignorant of it long; but we delayed the moment of undeceiving her. In order that I might consult with Friedlieben about the best introduction to telling her the truth, I begged her to go out for something.

She was scarcely out of the door when I heard her ask the landlord—

'Pray, sir, how far is it from this to Madras?'

I flew out; I saw my wife turn as pale as death; I caught her in my arms to bring her back into the room.

'At least four thousand leagues,' the landlord had replied; 'it is in the East Indies.'

She was a long time before she could come to herself. Her imagination represented Charles's danger in the most frightful colors, and supposed all the plagues scattered over the surface of the globe, were to be encountered in the East Indies—earthquakes, pestilence, and cannibals. We had deceived her with respect to the distance of Madras, and she would not give ear to a word of what we strove to say to comfort her. She pictured him in a Weser boat for she had no other idea of a ship than what she figured to herself from having seen the boats on that river, ready to perish in the middle of a boisterous sea, or devoured by savages on his arrival.

'I have been in the Indies myself,' said Friedleben, interrupting her; and relating some particulars of his voyage, and of his residence in that country.

My wife listened to him; her terrors increasing when she began to form an idea of the immensity of the seas: for her imagination had not gone beyond a trip of a few days; but when she heard told of six months' navigation, she lost all hopes of ever seeing her Charles again. We wanted to give her some notion of a ship, but she took every thing we said for fables.

We set out for Stade the same evening, and arrived without any accident.

Friedleben went out to look for Charles. We waited for him at the inn, as he required it; and never did time move slower than it did until we saw them both enter.

'My Charles!' cried his mother, rushing into his arms.

It was above four months since we had seen him: he appeared taller, handsomer, and more robust, his countenance glowed with health; his uniform became him admirably; and, had it not been for the East Indies, this would have been a moment of perfect happiness.

My son spoke to us of his voyage, and every thing he said was satisfactory. His captain was the officer's brother who had taken a friendship for him, and had given him his word to promote him; and Friedleben's gifts had enabled him to lay in every thing that could render his voyage agreeable.

Friedleben quitted us, to leave us alone with Charles, and my wife became comforted. The landlord had been several times to the Indies himself, and could not conceive what should frighten her: he assured her that the Hindoos were not man-eaters.'

My son obtained leave of his captain to remain with us until his departure. Friedleben had a great deal of busi-

ness on his hands, and we saw him but little; he took a journey to Hamburgh for some days, wrote a great deal, bought merchandise, and gave several entertainments to the officers of the ship.—Two days before Charles was to sail, he gave him a heap of letters of recommendation and credit for the principal commercial houses in the british settlements; a considerable sum in ready money, and several bales of european goods.

Mr. Elsworth, the captain of the ship, happened to be an intimate acquaintance of Friedleben, and promised us to take care of Charles as if he were his own son.

'It will go very hard indeed,' said he, looking at Friedleben, 'if we cannot get him into the company's service.'

At last the moment arrived when the ship was to sail. Being anxious to have a nearer view of it, the captain took us on board, and showed us every thing in the politest manner. My innocent Augusta changed from the excess of fear to an excess of security.

'It is impossible,' remarked she, 'that such an immense machine ever can sink.'

Friedleben took Charles aside, and conversed with him a long time; then conducted him to mr. Elsworth, to whom he recommended him in the strongest terms. The drums and music began to resound upon the shore, and the sailors made the ship re-echo with their huzzas. We embraced our poor Charles, and got into the boat.

Friedleben begged us to return by ourselves into the city, and to wait for him at the inn, as he wished to accompany Charles beyond the Downs.

We remained on the shore to see the troops file off.—My wife imagined every moment that she saw Charles upon the ship's deck, and sobbed aloud. A stranger told her—

'You will see nothing more to-day—they will not sail

till it is night; but the ship will cast anchor about five miles from this, near yonder point; and if you will go there to-morrow morning, you may perhaps see your son again.'

'Ah!' then I will go there,' cried she.

Our coachman knew the road, and offered to drive there immediately. We alighted at a village not far from the sea, and thence ascended an eminence which had a boundless view of the expanse. A brisk gale sprung up, and the waters began to swell at the mouth of the river.

'Oh what a tempest!' cried my wife.

Yet the people near her assured her that is was a favorable wind.

The ships did not cast anchor, but continued to make way. My poor wife never quitted her place, but looked after them until the last sail confounded itself with the grey vapors of the horizon. I wished to return to Stade the same evening; but Augusta was so weak, that we were obliged to pass the night in the village. We returned next morning; she was in a state of apathy and mute despair that afflicted me seriously; and I was rejoiced to see Friedleben come back, who had accompanied his young friend as far as was possible. He brought my wife a letter from her son; and told us that he had no doubt but the lad would be at Madras in three or four months, as the ship sailed remarkably well.

We set out sorrowfully to return home; and, as the village where Wahlen lived was not much out of the way, Friedleben proposed to my wife the sweetest of remaining consolations,—that of embracing her dear Elizabeth.

CHAP. XIV.

Parental joy.

We alighted before we came to the village and took a shorter path on foot. Friedleben seemed quite absent, and scarcely said a word.

'What are you thinking of?' demanded I.

'The first time I came here,' said he in my ear, 'I stopped up holes in Wahlen's house; but now I intend to penetrate into his conscience. I am thinking of the sermon I am to preach to him.'

I was not without apprehensions that my son-in-law might be displeased at the lessons of a stranger who had no right to interfere with his conduct; so I made Friedleben promise to put off his moralizing till next day.

We stole softly into the house. The parlor-door was half open. We saw Elizabeth at her wheel. She was very plainly dressed. Her eldest child, our little Lolotte, was sitting on the floor beside her, listening to a song her mamma was singing; and the other infant was in its cradle.

'Again, again, mamma!' cried the child, as soon as she had finished the couplet; and the lovely mamma began her song again, looking on the prattler, as only a mother does.

'Elizabeth!' at length exclaimed my wife.—The dear girl started and flew into her arms with a cry of joy and surprise.

The room was arranged perfectly as it ought to be suit-

able to the economy of a little farm; all the luxury we had before remarked had disappeared, and there remained nothing more than what was necessary to make it commodious. Friedleben and I looked at each other; he smiled. I feared that it was want which had brought about this reform; but Elizabeth's serenity made me easy. After the first embraces she resumed her character as a mother, and, putting her daughter into our arms, recited this passage of an english poet——

"I have doubled my existence, and their hearts
"Will henceforth beat in unison for you."

I took the children in my arms, one after the other, and gave them my benediction. The little boy was called Charles: my wife strained him to her heart, pronouncing that name, and thinking with less anguish, of the Charles who was far away.

Every instant we could remark the great change that was brought about in the house: the old valet had no longer his fine cloth coat and silk stockings, but a good country jerkin, which bore the marks of labor.—Friedleben went out, looked at the court, opened some doors, examined every thing, and returned with joy sparkling in his countenance.

'It is now, my young friend,' said he to Elizabeth, 'that I like every thing I see here, and am sure of your happiness.—When does Wahlen return?—I had a sermon ready for him; but God be praised, it is not now necessary.'

'Yes, I am happy,' said Elizabeth, smiling, and raising her eyes and hands to heaven.—'My dear father,' said she, turning to me, 'I was firmly persuaded that I should one day be happy. My husband loves me, and he has an excellent heart. I was only afraid that we should become happy through necessity or repentance; but I owe all intirely to my dear Wahlen.—Oh! he is so good and I am so happy!'

She knelt then beside the cradle, as if to take the child; but her looks, which were directed toward heaven, and her clasped hands which she laid upon its little bosom, evinced what passed in her mind at that moment.

In the evening she related the change in her husband's conduct, interrupting herself every instant to add something to his eulogium. The next morning, the old valet related to us what had passed on his side; and, from the two recitals, we gathered the following particulars.

The good man, seeing his young mistress tormented with inquietudes, took one day he said, *the liberty*, to make some representations to his master. Wahlen was indulging in the pleasing idea that his economy was doing wonders, and took the lesson very ill. He therefore replied coldly. The old servant was not discouraged, but returned to the charge; and Wahlen, with some harshness, obliged him to silence. At this moment Elizabeth entered; and the old man went out sorrowfully.

Elizabeth looked after him, and then at Wahlen, whose forehead was clouded with ill humor.

'Dear Wahlen,' said she to him, 'that respectable old man should never quit thee with any cause of affliction.'

'Neither should he forget,' said Wahlen, 'that he is our domestic, nor all that I have done for him.'

Elizabeth could not bear that reproach.

'Oh! if thou but knew,' cried she, 'how grateful he is, and what he does for us!'

'What does he then?' asked Wahlen.

Elizabeth was embarrassed, and strove to elude the answer. Her husband became more pressing; and, in fine, she was obliged to confess that old Peter had not only given her his wages, as promptly as he received them, on pretext of keeping his money for him; but had even paid some urgent debts unknown to herself, which she had only lately discovered. Wahlen was moved, but he was also humiliated.

'This is something which must not be suffered,' said he; calling back the old man before Elizabeth could hinder him. 'I know at present,' said he to the faithful creature, with a serious tone, but with kindness, 'what the motive of your observations is—they were natural enough; but this cannot be, my good Peter: I would rather deprive myself of any thing than you should have cause to complain. How much is coming to you for what you have paid for us, and your wages.'

'Ah! dear master—ah! my lord baron,' said Peter, taking Wahlen's hand reverentially and letting fall some tears as he pressed it to his lips; 'no, it is not myself I think of—I am happy indeed—very happy, that my lady baroness condescends to keep my money for me, and you allow your old Peter to pass the days he has yet to live about you. Indeed I would joyfully give them for you both; but pardon me, I was not able to see my lady baroness fret, and take so much trouble, while——'

'Fret! exclaimed Wahlen, looking at Elizabeth, 'what is it that frets thee?'

She blushed, and embraced her husband, smiling.

'Our good Peter,' said she, 'has never waited on a lady, and he does not know that their pleasure is to do a thousand little things which he thinks are a trouble.'

The old man shook his head.

'My lady baroness, said he, 'deprives herself of every thing, and works beyond her strength. Oh, dear lord! she deprives herself of every thing, and you are the only one that does not perceive it.'

'I deprive myself of nothing, good Peter,' replied she, laughing sweetly, 'see, have not I the pretty robe and bonnet my husband gave me. I take care of them on his account, and Peter thinks it is a privation not to change them.'

'Ah! it is not that I mean,' cried the old man; 'it is not to make yourself robes that you work all night.'

'How! all night!' demanded Wahlen.

'My love, I like to rise early; I have been always accustomed to it, as well as to work when I am up.'

'Ah!' exclaimed the old man, weeping, 'have you been accustomed to get up at three o'clock, on a cold winter's morning, to spin by the light of a little lamp, or mend my master's and the house linen? and then besides you make your own robes, and every thing for your children, and do the work of four women at least. My heart bleeds to see it, and I cannot be silent any longer! when my lord is absent, do you even sit down to table? you only take a morsel of bread and milk.'

'I am not hungry when Wahlen is absent,' said Elizabeth, smiling, and stealing away a starting tear; 'but why should he be told all that?'

'That he may know, my lady, what an excellent wife he has; and that only for her he would have been ruined long ago. And did she keep a penny of the money she received for herself? did not she instantly discharge all your debts? and how she wept to have to pay for so many useless things, which could not in the least serve to make her happy. Ah! my good mistress is indeed unhappy; and every new present you make her, is a fresh occasion to despair, and to redouble her labor and pains.'

Elizabeth could not now say a word; this too real picture of her situation affected her exceedingly. Wahlen, more afflicted than herself, cast down his eyes in silence. Good Peter had suffered himself to be hurried away by the warmth of his feelings.

'Pardon me,' said he to his master; 'if I offend you, it is because I thought you worthy of hearing the truth; and that at my age——'

'I thank thee, Peter,' cried Wahlen, taking him by the hand; 'thou hast not offended me—quite the contrary. But Elizabeth, have I deserved so little confidence on thy part?'

'I have told thee often at first, love, that we went to too much expense; thou wouldst not believe me, and I could not think of afflicting thee, or putting thee out of humor; thou gavest thyself up to chimerical hopes, and I, on my side, as simply hoped to repair thy useless expenses by my secret economy; but thou expendest more in an instant than I could make up for in a long time.'

'And thou wert silent, Elizabeth?'

'No: I reminded thee often of Friedleben's advice—I only concealed my inquietudes from thee. But, since Peter has betrayed me through an excess of affection, I avow to thee at present, my love, that I have shed many a tear on receiving that money from my parents, and what my dear Mina sent me: I felt that it should be better employed, and Mina ought rather have sent it to our poor parents than to us. I will read thee her letters.'

She gave him some, and he looked them over.

'Good God!' cried he, 'how culpable I have been! it was then for me that she quitted the paternal roof, and for me that thy worthy father and tender mother deprived themselves, perhaps, of the most necessary things; for I do not credit this story of a lottery. What a thick mist has obscured my sight! but it is vanished for ever, dear Elizabeth, and we shall henceforth be truly happy.'

He wanted immediately to change his dress for that of a countryman; and his wife had great difficulty in persuading him to make the necessary reforms by little and little.'

'No,' said he; 'he who has not the courage to shake off the chains of slavery at once, is made to wear them always.'

'My dear Wahlen, the most glorious triumphs of virtue are those that do not attract attention.'

'Elizabeth, I have sacrificed too much to that vain pride I at present detest. Let us henceforth live like plain farmers: look at this coat—it does not become our station.'

'It is thine, dear friend, and already paid for: it is therefore the cheapest thou canst wear. We want to economize; let us begin by determining to wear what clothes we have as long as they last.'

From that day Elizabeth, in conjunction with her husband, began to make essential reforms in their household. She assumed the management of the dairy openly—what she had not ventured to do before, unless indirectly. A small closet next the parlor, which Wahlen had fitted up with peculiar elegance, and called his wife's boudoir, was converted into a cool convenient pantry for keeping milk. The whole dwelling insensibly put on the appearance of a good farm-house; every week their dress became plainer, and they were soon able to do without the additional man and maid-servant whom Wahlen had hired.

All these changes were affected in such a manner, that he hardly perceived them, and never felt the least privation: he applied himself intirely to his farm, and with a success that encouraged him. Exercise and appetite seasoned plainer and better dishes; nay twas more: for his Elizabeth prepared them, and mutual love turned their toil into pleasure. She came every morning with her child to the field where he was at work, bringing their breakfast in a neat basket, with which they sat down together under a tree, and found the repast most delicious.

Wahlen had some trouble in the commencement, before he became used to his new mode of living, the more so as he did not practise the gradations that might have rendered it easier; but he had made it a point of honor not to let himself be discouraged, and soon acquired a

genuine taste for the agricultural life, to such a degree that, in a moment of enthusiasm, he sent to his uncle the old baron, all the documents he had against him, resolved not even to be tempted to make use of them, his little farm being sufficient for his happiness. He begged his wife not to write to us what had taken place, in order that we might enjoy the pleasure of such a surprise at our first visit.

'The tempests of life,' said Elizabeth, concluding her recital, 'are now passed, and the remembrance of the unhappy moments one has supported, becomes a pleasure.'

'Ah! the tempests.' cried my wife, looking at me wistfully.

I comprehended her meaning.

'Those to which Charles is exposed, will blow over without injuring him,' said I to her; 'have confidence in God, my dear friend; thou seest how he can make what appears to us an evil, conduce to prosperity and happiness.'

CHAP. XV.

The uncle.

Next morning after breakfast Elizabeth sat down to play the piano and to sing to us. Her farming and household affairs had not made her neglect these talents: she kept in mind that it was to the charm of mu-

to she was indebted for the first impression she had made upon her dear Wahlen's heart. We listened to her with delight, and all our inquietudes were lulled to forgetfulness, when the old domestic entered the room with precipitation.

'Good God!' cried he, with the tone of dismay, 'here is the old baron, my young master's uncle!'

Elizabeth ceased to sing, and rose up, trembling. My wife was terrified; and, for my own part, I lost all courage. I recollected what Wahlen had told me of his uncle's haughtiness and violence.

Friedleben, who had Elizabeth's child upon his knee, remained quietly seated.

'What shall we do?' cried my daughter. 'If Wahlen were but here!'

'God defend us!' exclaimed honest Peter; 'see, there is the coach turning round the garden already! if my lady would go to meet him?'

'It is better that she should wait for him here,' observed Friedleben.

The coach drove into the court, and the uncle alighted. Not one of us stirred; old Peter alone went to receive the baron, with a world of bows and expressions of respect. The baron asked him in a surly voice—'is there any one in the house?'

'Yes, my lord baron: my lady.'

'Alone?'

'Her ladyship's parents are with her.'

'The minister? I am glad of it.'

At this word my wife started with terror, and stood up before me, as if to defend me.

'Be tranquil, my children,' said I, softly; 'it is but a man. Let us put our trust in God—he will protect us.'

'Never,' cried Friedleben, 'has that protection been

more improperly invoked: you are going to deprive your daughter of all resolution. This is the moment to call forth firmness and dignity. Be composed, dear Elizabeth; you are baron Wahlen's wife, and this man's niece: do not forget either the one or the other.'

At that moment the door opened with a crash, and the baron made his entrance. He was dressed in a very rich suit, with a large star upon his breast. He stood at the door, and eyed us all around.

'Are you the minister's daughter?' demanded he, looking at Elizabeth sternly.

She only bowed her head.

'And he there?' said he, pointing at me with the end of his cane.

'That is my father,' replied she, with a trembling voice.

And this is doubtless your respectable mother? I am charmed to fall in with all the saintly family! and he there, does he belong to it also?' pointing to Friedleben.

Friedleben, who until then had his back half turned, did not discompose himself in the least. He only lifted his head, looked at the baron, and, pointing at him with his pipe*, said drily—'Who is that man that passes us all in review in such a manner?'

Elizabeth cast a suppliant look toward him, and the baron one of fury; which he did not seem to heed in the least, but began to dandle the child again.

'Is my unworthy nephew in the house?' demanded the baron, without addressing himself to any body in particular.

Every one was silent.

'Am I to be answered, young woman?' demanded he again.

* The custom of smoking tobacco is so prevalent in Germany, that the greater part of the men carry their pipes constantly with them: they smoke not only in the house, and before women, but in the streets and roads, on foot, on horseback, and in carriages. These pipes are ornamented very expensively, and wrought into a variety of shapes. Trans.

Poor Elizabeth had lost all presence of mind. I answered for her—'My son-in-law is absent.'

'Your son-in-law! I would advise you not to give that title to my nephew a second time.'

'Parson Bemrode's son-in-law, young baron Wahlen, is not at home,' said Friedleben.

The baron cast an indignant look upon him, and threw himself upon the sofa.

'In truth,' said he, with ill-humor, 'I have fallen into very bad company here.'

'I pity you, and ourselves still more,' retorted Friedleben, continuing to play with the child; 'we are truly in very bad company.'

'How!' cried the baron, rising up angrily, 'what would you say?'

'Do you imagine,' said Friedleben, very deliberately, and putting down the child, 'that your society, and the airs you take, are very agreeable to this young lady and her parents?'

'That is assuredly not my intention' replied the baron, with the same ill-humor. 'You think perhaps,' continued he, turning to my side, 'that I am come here to thank you for the fine marriage you have trumped up between your daughter and my nephew, whose name you have dishonored?'

Friedleben's coolness and spirit, and the overbearing insolence of the baron, had restored my courage.

'My lord,' said I, with dignity, 'choose more becoming terms. It was against my inclination, perfectly against my inclination, that your nephew espoused my daughter.'

'Against your inclination, mr. Parson!' returned the baron, with an ironical smile. 'It is an honor you have done us most undoubtedly! but this folly has lasted long enough. The violent love my nephew alledged for his justification, must be pretty well allayed ere now; and

what you expected, mr. Minister, will not come to pass. You thought that your daughter was to marry baron Von Wahlen, the rich heir; but he is and shall remain poor. However, if the young woman will listen to reason, I will not stop at a few thousand crowns——a separation——'

Elizabeth uttered a cry of horror.

'My lord,' said I, with the firmnes of indignation, 'we are not noble, it is true; but that does not give you a right to insult us, and if you persist——'

'Well, mr. Parson, what then?' said he, with an air of mockery, advancing toward me.

I grew a little confused again: however, an encouraging look from Friedleben recomposed me. I collected all my resolution, and said to him—'you consider us very despicable, my lord baron, and I know who deserves to be despised in reality.'

'What—what is it you know?' and his countenance inflamed with anger.—'What is it you know?' repeated he.

Friedleben, who had insensibly drawn closer to me, spoke.

'He knows, my lord baron, who is the most despicable here.'

'Sir,' replied he, with greater fury, 'it is not with you—it is with the minister I have to do.'

'My lord baron, I would have you to understand that, during your nephew's absence, I will protect his wife: and, from this moment, will not allow of any insult on your part.'

'Who are you then, to assume such a high tone?'

'A man, who will know how to find the means of bringing you to order, if you depart from it!'

'What! menaces directed to me? and in this house you dare——'

'Come, come,' said Friedleben, 'let us come to an understanding without abuse! what do you want with M. Wahlen and his parents? what brings you here?'

'I want to announce to the man who bears my name, that he has no more to expect from me, and that from this moment all my property belongs to my wife's relations.'

'Have you heard that, Elizabeth?' demanded Friedleben, in a serious tone.

'Yes.'

'Are you afflicted at it?'

'No, provided he do not disturb our happiness—that is all we desire.'

'Do you hear that, my lord?' said Friedleben.—'There is nothing more thought about your money here, than your menaces.'

'Indeed!' replied the baron, striving to smother his fury. 'Well then, I hope to let you see shortly that I have a right to speak in this house. Tell your husband to remember a certain contract:—has he never spoken to you about it?'

'Yes,' said Elizabeth, growing pale, 'he has spoken to me concerning it; but he told me, at the same time, that you would never do such injustice to your brother's son.'

'What is the affair Elizabeth?' asked Friedleben.

'Only a trifle,' replied the baron—'it is only that the house in which I am braved and insulted, is my property.'

'It is not to you I speak,' said Friedleben, 'it is to lady Wahlen. Say then, dear friend, what is it?'

'My husband,' answered she, 'when he was setting out on his travels, made a donation of this estate to his uncle in a jest.'

'I do not jest in affairs of this nature,' said the baron; 'and if my nephew supposed it, he deceived himself.'

'My husband,' rejoined Elizabeth, 'thought so little of your being ever disposed to take advantage of that jest, that he has lately sent you some deeds, which are of great importance to you.'

'Of very great importance in effect!' said he, grinning. 'Nothing can prevent me any longer from exercising my right upon what belongs to me. Do you hear that, mr. protector?' turning to Friedleben.

My wife caught me by the hand—she was almost fainting.

'My lord,' said Friedleben, with visible emotion, 'the fate of all this family lies at your disposal. Consider, the blood that flows in the veins of this babe is the blood of your father, and of your brother, who was an excellent man.'

'An excellent man truly!' replied the baron, in an ironical tone. 'He made such another match as his son; and his father died with vexation.'

'My lord, surely your intentions cannot be serious; you would not push inhumanity to such an extreme—especially if their be any truth in what your nephew gave me to understand.'

The milder and more suppliant was Friedleben, the harsher and more inflexible became the baron.

'You need not take the trouble,' said he, with a disdainful air, 'to speak for these people—your politeness comes too late. I have just now made a proposal to that young woman—'

Elizabeth interrupted him with spirit—'be pleased my lord not to repeat it. Take this estate—take, if you will, all we possess: our hands will provide for our sustenance—we can work and be happy still.'

'Yes thou wilt be happy my daughter!' cried Friedleben: 'thy heart can dispense with every thing, except love and virtue.'

He took up the child, and presented it to the baron.

'See,' said he to him, 'this innocent little creature! have pity on it!'

The unfeeling, cruel man, turned away his head; making a gesture with his hand, as if to repulse the child.

'Take thy child, unfortunate mother,' continued Friedleben, giving it to Elizabeth; 'this man is not susceptible of pity, or any good sentiment—he no longer deserves the smallest consideration.—You are a monster of inhumanity, my lord baron!' said he, approaching him, and with the tone and look of indignation.

'It is my turn not to mind you,' replied the Baron, with an affectation of contempt; 'but beware of too far provoking my anger.'

'That is my design, however; but I can soon find the means of allaying it:—the guilty man always trembles, even when he seems for a few moments to have right on his side. I repeat to you, then, that you are a monster of inhumanity and fraud!'

I trembled at hearing Friedleben speak in this manner. The Baron approached him in a fury. Our friend stopped him by stretching out his hand, and saying, with firmnes—' do you remember lawyer Schumel?'

The baron turned suddenly pale; rage and fear were confounded in his look.

'We shall see one another again,' muttered he, going toward the door.

Friedleben stood in his way.

'Thou seest, barbarous man!' said he, 'that I know where to strike a heart of the temperement of thine! I am not a great lord, like you; but what I know, puts me at this moment much above you—and you are in my power, my lord baron.'

'Really! and it is you that would make me afraid?' returned the baron, looking at him with inquietude, and at the same time striving to overawe him.

'We shall see, my lord baron. I have been with that

lawyer Schumel; and I took him by the sensitive part of scoundrels of his training, which is neither the fear of God nor of the devil, but that of the gibbet or the mines. You, my lord baron, you had taken him by another way. Money is undoubtedly a sure means; but you shall hear that mine was not without its effect also. As soon as I spoke to him properly concerning it, he went to bring me a certain big book with a red cover.——Why grow so very pale, my lord baron? you know that book, and what is written in it, as well as I do. You shall find presently that I knew how to make mr. Schumel speak. He consented to every thing I desired, and you will condescend to have the kindness to consent also, my good lord baron.——Dear Elizabeth, be so obliging to send immediately for the next scrivener, and let him bring two witnesses with him.'

Elizabeth went out. My wife and I remained, listening in silence, without being able to comprehend any part of what was doing, and almost looking upon Friedleben as a preternatural being.

'What do you want of me?' asked the baron, in a softened voice, and yet striving to resume his haughtiness. 'Do not imagine to trifle! you are not where you suppose, sir; and if you think——'

'What do you imagine I think?' said Friedleben. 'But will you have me tell you what you think at this moment?'

'How does this devil of a fellow know such circumstances and my serious affairs so intimately?'

The baron threw himself down upon an arm-chair; he leaned his mouth upon the pummel of his cane, and the quick contrasting succession of colors in his face declared the agitation of his mind.

'I am going,' said he, after some instants of silence, and getting up abruptly. 'Do as you think proper, sir; but recollect that I am able to make you repent of what you may attempt against me.'

'You will positively not stir from this, my lord!' said Friedleben, with composure.

'Who is it that will hinder me?' cried the baron, advancing to the door.

'Your conscience! recollect the first page of the red book. I have read that page: it is signed by count Boredorf.'

The baron paused. His gloomy looks were rivetted to the floor.

'You will remain, my lord baron, and you will likewise consent to what I shall demand of you.'

At that moment the scrivener entered, with two witnesses.

'You are to make out a bond,' said Friedleben to him, 'by which the baron von Wahlen, here present, assures to his niece, the baroness von Wahlen, here present in in like manner, the sum of twenty thousand crowns payable in fifteen days.'

'Twenty thousand crowns!' stammered the baron; 'no never! do whatever you think fit. We shall see one another again.'

'That is not too much,' said Friedleben; 'you know in your conscience that it is no more than the amount of the count's deed of trust.'

The baron grew pale again, and was silent. The scrivener drew out the bond, gave it to the witnesses to sign, and presented it to the baron, who signed it, without saying a word. When it was completed he wanted to give it to my daughter.'

'I do not know,' said she, 'if I ought to receive this paper. No, I will take nothing by force from my husband's uncle.'

Friedleben insisted upon her taking it; but she refused it consistently.

'You see, my lord,' said he to the baron, 'these are scruples to which you are but little accustomed. The husband gives you up documents that might be prejudicial to you, and the wife refuses your restitution. My

dear Elizabeth, your uncle gives you nothing. These twenty thousand crowns are yours by right;—ask himself.'

'Yes, yes,' cried the baron, 'I cannot deny it; they belong to my nephew—take the paper.'

Elizabeth then took the deed.

'But, sir,' continued he, 'you see what a sacrifice I make! I may hope at least to rely upon your silence.—What assurance will you give me?'

'What assurance?—none. Is it a mutual contract that we have just signed?—no my lord, I promise you nothing at all; and if I were to promise you silence, would that render you more tranquil?—it is the first punishment of the guilty man, that confidence never pervades his heart. Or is it conformably to yourself, that you would rely upon another's promise?'

'How, sir!—you will promise nothing for such a sum? I have then been your dupe!'

'I have never duped any body,' said Friedleben, with inexpressible dignity, and a look that made the baron's eyes fall to the ground. 'Elizabeth, give him back the deed.'—She gave it back instantly.—'Well now, what are you waiting for? tear that paper—it is in your hands!'

The baron appeared to hesitate an instant; shame prevailed.

'No, sir,' said he, returning it to Elizabeth, 'it does not belong to me. But woe to you if you speak.'

'It seems you are menacing me, my lord baron,' said Friedleben, coolly.

'I!—No, sir.'

'You do well. Let us put an end to it. You have doubtless about you the transfer your nephew made you in jest, of this little domain? let us see it I pray you.'

The baron took it out of his pocket, and presented it to Elizabeth. Friedleben took it, read it, and tore it, saying—'your wish should be, that every thing you have done could be as easily annihilated. And for whom have you committed so many acts of injustice?' added he in a feeling tone. 'For a son laid long since in the grave. If during his life you had some sort of excuse, it exists no longer; death has destroyed all your plans, and you were not ashamed to persevere in them. What have you left at present? the remorse of a useless crime—of a crime that your heart disavowed; for your heart has not always been what it is to day. The dispositions of your youth were honest and generous: it is pride that has lost you—it is that which deprived you of a brother whom you loved, and who loved you. Upon his death-bed he repeated to his son—'do not go to law with him; he is my brother, and he loved me once.' How could you forget him? how could you have projected in cool blood, the ruin and misery of the generous son of your generous brother?'

The baron was visibly affected.

'He was my heir,' said he with a gloomy look; 'I reared him, and considered him as my son.'

'Because he bore your name, behold your only motive! but as soon as he himself laid the foundation of his happiness, by giving his hand to this truly noble and excellent woman, it became, according to you, necessary to ruin him like his father. You could not find it in you to pardon your nephew's marriage: not that it was a bad action in your eyes, but because he had judged for himself, and been beforehand with you. You began to hate him through envy, yet what real wrong did the poor young man do you?'

'What kind of a being, or who are you?' exclaimed the baron, trembling with amazement, that any one should thus read the bottom of his soul.

'A man who knows you and your conduct, and who has you in his power.

The baron held out his hand to him with a dejected look.

'No,' said Friedleben; 'I hoped to have awakened a more estimable sentiment in your breast than fear; I hoped to excite shame, or repentance.'

Friedleben went out to the next room; he seemed to be more affected than irritated. We remained alone with the baron in the most embarrassing situation. I cast an unperceived glance toward him—he appeared confounded and petrified. It seemed to me that I ought to say something to him, but what?

'Your lordship has found the roads very bad,' said I to him at last.

I had scarcely let slip this unmeaning phrase, when I felt how ridiculous and out of place it was after the recent scene. I had blushed at my silliness before my wife had time to pull me by the sleeve, which she did to make me perceive it.

'God be praised!' cried the baron at the end of a few seconds. 'Yes, the roads are very bad.'

My wife made, in a timid voice, the uninteresting reflection that it was disagreeable to travel on bad roads.

Friedleben, who overheard our conversation in the next room, has told me since that he never heard any thing so ridiculous; and that the sentimental tone with which we expressed these insignificant words, rendered it still more so.

'But who is the gentleman that is just gone out?' said the baron in a low and rather friendly voice.

I did not well know what to answer.

'He is an honest man,' said I at last, 'who is a little hasty, but good to all the world, I assure you.'

'I am not so unjust as he seems to think; indeed I should be happy to settle the business amicably.'

Elizabeth rose up, and approached him timidly, holding the deed in her hand.

'My lord,' said she, with tears in her eyes, 'I am content, since we are to keep this estate. I wish for nothing more. This is too much—certainly too much!'

'No, no,' returned the baron, putting away the paper with his hand, 'it is not too much!—and his eyes wandered toward the door where Friedleben had gone out. Elizabeth wanted him to take back the deed. He declined it; but it was evidently from the fear with which he was inspired by the incomprehensible stranger.

'Nobody shall know that you have taken it,' said Elizabeth in a low voice.

'But if my lord insists upon your keeping it,' cried I.

'I fear, dear father, that it would be at the expense of our happiness.'

'His lordship knows very well that it is not you who have demanded it; he will not bear any ill will to you.'

'That is not what I fear,' said Elizabeth, with an expression of concern, 'but I tremble at the effects this large sum may have upon our domestic happiness. I beseech you my lord, take back what we have no occasion for; only give my husband and me your friendship, in its stead and then we shall be perfectly happy.'

The baron regarded Elizabeth a long time in silence, as if he sought to read through her looks. In fine, he took the paper, and put it in his pocket.

'I thank you,' said Elizabeth to him joyfully, but in a low voice; 'you have delivered me from a great inquietude. I beg you, my dear father, do not mention it to our friend.'

This generosity appeared to me to be a little inconsiderate, and I made some objections. The baron sat down, looking at us in silence, yet with the air of being abstract-

ed in thought. Elizabeth told me in a low voice what her reasons were, and drew me an affecting, though romantic picture of the kind of happiness which is founded on labor and moderation.

'But, my child,' observed I, 'the sum his lordship made over to thee in that deed belongs not to thee, but to thy husband; and dost thou venture to dispose of it in this way?'

'Yes, father, I do. Wahlen loves me, and we have between us but one mind and one heart. Such a considerable sum, and the manner in which we have acquired it—I could never lift my eyes after.'

'Well, my child, perhaps thou art right. But Friedleben must not know it,' continued I, looking at the baron; 'and he shall not.'

My wife embraced her daughter, and said to her affectionately—'dear child, heaven will recompense thee for it.

I felt myself more at my ease, and breathed a generous contempt for gold and the goods of the world; but as if the purity of elevated sentiments were to be always alloyed by something earthly, I felt at the same time an emotion of pride on comparing myself with the baron. I rose up, and strutted about the room.—'Yes, Elizabeth,' said I, 'thou hast done well; the richest are those who know how to do without riches. Yes, my lord baron, keep your gold; we do not want it.'

The baron beheld us with an astonished look. In a moment he took out the paper, and presented it to Elizabeth again—'Take it,' cried he; 'it is now voluntarily, and with all my heart that I give it you.

Elizabeth took it, and tore it, but yet without showing any extraordinary vivacity. I continued to walk about a little more proudly, and could at that moment have said to the greatest monarch, like Diogenes—'stand on one side, that I may behold my daughter, who knows how to contemn riches.'

Many readers will undoubtedly pronounce our conduct at that moment to have been folly. Sometimes I am apt to see it in that light myself; nevertheless, I should think but little of the man who had never known some such moments in his life, when the heart and head, exalted by a generous sentiment, soar above riches as unworthy dross. Hours, months, and whole years come afterwards, during which the sacrifices made in such moments are to be regretted——are they therefore folly? I grant affirmation as to the regret, but I repeat again that I should but little esteem the man who was exempt from every such moment of folly.

At the university where I studied, we had a lecturer, who was taxed with madness by the other professors, because he at some moments would speak of science with the most profound contempt, notwithstanding he was himself a man of great learning.

He died young, and the moral world underwent as great a loss in him as the learned. He precipitated himself into the midst of a house in flames, to save the child of a distracted mother, when a professor of natural philosophy was endeavoring to persuade him that the house was just falling in. At the instant he was returning with the child, and putting it into its mother's arms, a burning joist fell down upon him, and he died some days afterwards of the consequence of this accident.

'You know I had warned you of it,' said the other professor to him.

'You were right;' replied the dying man, 'and feeling as I do at this moment I believe I should not expose myself as I have done; but the man who cannot at times make little of his life, is not worthy of living.'

'See what always comes to pass when people do not accustom themselves to reflect before they act, observed each of the professors to us after this melancholy event. We lads however admired without exception the devotion to which the magnanimous man had fallen a victim, and we learned with pain that he had seemed to disavow it at

his death by saying—'I believe I would not expose myself again as I have done.'

At present that I am old, I admire his actions still; but I admire also the noble frankness with which he acknowledged at the close of life, that he was not at all moments capable of such an action. Well then, he was reproached with madness, because he was warm and enthusiastic; yet his scholars were pleased at listening to, notwithstanding they had not much consideration for him; whether their want of reverence were owing to the sort of contempt with which the other professors spoke of him, or that he had not the grave, solemn, air of his pedantic colleagues. I remember the worthy soul on the present occasion, because he loved to sympathise with that species of enthusiasm and *hurrying-on* which makes one sometimes forget the baser rules of prudence, and that my daughter's conduct in tearing the deed was of that kind. The generous martyr used to instruct us in history, and his lessons were interesting as well as fraught with information; but it was thought that he delivered them with too much passion, and not enough of impartiality. On one occasion there appeared a sort of lampoon against him, in which this fault was exaggerated; and a fellow student of mine had the ill-nature to leave it upon his desk.

'I know all this already, gentlemen,' said he to us, smiling. 'Believe me gentlemen, a man would not be worthy of knowing and professing to lecture on history, if he could run over in cool blood certain epochas or read without shuddering the actions of a Pizarro or a Dubois; or if his heart did not beat with more liveliness on pronouncing the name of Antoninus. I am a man, gentlemen, and the history upon which I descant before you is that of my fellows and of yours. Let superior minds behold every thing that passes upon this earth with the same tranquillity they would an emmet bank; but we ordinary men cannot treat coolly of any thing that interests us. There are periods in history when providence, virtue, and confidence between man and man appear to have abandoned the earth: he who does not feel his

heart torn on perusing the account of them, is——but a learned man.'—And in a situation similar to ours with the baron, she who would not have torn the bond of twenty thousand crowns, would have neither been a woman nor a man, but a being that calculated the price of life by the weight of gold.

Friedleben returned to the room. Elizabeth put away the scraps of torn paper, that he might not perceive them. The baron remained seated in the same place. His countenance bore strong marks of preter-occupation and internal struggling. Friedleben looked at him stedfastly. The baron sustained the look.

'I could wish,' said he to Friedleben in a very civil manner, 'that we might become friends.'

The other did not reply.

'My heart is still—' resumed the baron. 'No, I was not in my youth what I afterward became. Every thing that should have contributed to the happines of my life failed me at once by an inconceivable fatality, and my temper became soured. My brother, do you know that he was not better than I? in our youth—' Friedleben made a sign with his head—' when I saw my fairest hopes blasted through him—hatred, I acknowledge it—odious hatred took possession of my soul. He deprived me of all—of the heart and hand of her I loved to madness. Do you know that adventure likewise?'

'Yes,' said Friedleben, coldly, 'I know it; but your brother was innocent.'

'He was; but I was ignorant of it then.'

'You have learned it?'

'Too late; I had already hated him.'

'Too late? is it ever too late to cease to hate? but why persecute him as you have done?'

'Because he showed contempt for me on an occasion when, it is true, I had designed to give him pain.

Friedleben reflected an instant, as if striving to recal something to mind.

'Yes,' returned he, 'that may be true; but your nephew?'

'My nephew!'

His countenance darkened a little.

'That alliance could not be indifferent to me. One circumstance was calculated to render it still more odious. I was told that his wife had been promised to a young man she loved, and that Wahlen had only obtained her hand because I was rich, and he was to inherit my fortune. I wished to punish his wife for her infidelity and avidity, but at present——'

He approached Elizabeth, and embraced her.

'My daughter,' said he to her, 'your soul is noble and generous; and in refusing that paper, you have won the heart of an uncle who now loves you tenderly.'

At that instant the door opened, and Wahlen entered the room. He remained some seconds motionless with amazement and joy at the spectacle before him—his wife in the arms of his uncle! he then ran to him himself, and pressed him to his breast. The joy became general; Augusta and I embraced each other, our daughter, and our son-in-law. Friedleben alone remained perfectly unmoved.

'To what do I owe this happy change?' demanded Wahlen at last.

'To me,' replied Friedleben drily.

I perceived the impression this answer, and the sort of haughty tone in which it was pronounced, made upon the old baron.

'You have been the occasion of it,' said I; 'but it is, above all, owing to his lordship's own heart.'

'It is to me,' repeated Friedleben with still greater emphasis; 'it is to the fear I inspired him with.'

I was confounded at such a grossly insolent apostrophe from a man who had hitherto conducted himself with propriety, and my countenance must have expressed the discontent I felt. He persisted notwithstanding: it was clear that he intended to offend the baron. 'It is to me alone!' said he again.

'Yes,' cried the baron, 'I confess you had inspired me with fear; but at present—' he took his nephew in his arms. 'My son I succeeded in getting the greater part of thy father's property into my hands. Conceive, then, what a sacrifice I make thee by the acknowledgment.'

He leaned his forehead for some moments upon his nephew's shoulder; then rising up slowly, and holding him still embraced—'sir,' said he to Friedleben, 'I no longer fear you. Come, my children, my dear children!' so saying he made Wahlen and his wife sit down beside him.

There was something so noble in the baron's conduct, that it rendered Friedleben's rudeness more glaring.

'One may fall,' said I to him, 'but it is glorious to rise in this manner.'

'To fall is still to fall,' retorted Friedleben. 'It were better not to have fallen; there always remains some stain from self degradation.'

'It were better to fall sometimes,' cried I, 'than to raise one's self haughtily upon the faults of others.'

'You are right,' said he, smiling and pressing my hand; 'I am very glad that you have told me this truth, although you are indebted for the hardihood to tell it me only to the happy turn things have taken.'

He had penetrated me. I had become bolder since the reconciliation of my children with their uncle. I lowered my eyes, a little ashamed, and did not dare to raise them toward Friedleben, even when he pressed my hand a second time.

'You do not fear me any longer then?' said he, turning to the baron, with a tone of gaiety that displeased me as much as the former one.

The baron looked at him with an almost contemptuous air, and replied nothing.

'Well, then,' said Friedleben, resuming his usual good-natured voice, 'if you fear me no longer, you must love me.'

He turned up his sleeve, and showed the baron a large scar above the wrist. 'Know me, Wahlen, and be satisfied. I love thee still as I did then.'

The baron started up, and threw himself into his arms.

'Gracious God! what do I behold? is it indeed thou, Ludwig? is it thou? is it my friend that I find again at the end of thirty years? Ludwig, couldst thou have abandoned me so long? thou who wert the guardian angel of my heart! I only fell because thou hadst deserted me!'

Big tears filled the eyes of Friedleben; and his emotion, which he strove in vain to hide, hindered him from speaking.

'Dont make me that reproach,' cried he at last. 'I left thee, because I had been a witness of thy fall.'

'I swear,' rejoined the baron, 'by the holy name of our friendship, and by the memory of thy so much beloved sister, that I only became criminal because thou hadst abandoned me. When I lost the object of my love, I still remained what I had been; but when I lost my friend, him who had until then directed my mind and every action of my life, I fell—I fell through pride and despair. Ah, Ludwig! how couldst thou abandon me!'

'Before my departure—I recollect it well, Wahlen. I tell thee it was love that made thee fall.'

'No, it made me totter. Ah, Ludwig! thou knowest not that dangerous passion! if thou hadst loved me as I did thee, thou wouldst not have quitted me. I would not have done so; I would have arrested thee on the edge of the abyss. Ah! he who has one virtuous friend left, can not fall as I have done. I repeat it, Ludwig—I fell because thou didst abandon me.'

'And I quitted thee,' said Friedleben, 'because thou wert no longer deserving of a friend.'

'No, Ludwig, thou art mistaken. I was, no doubt, misled by despair, but still worthy of thee. 'He abandons me,' said I, 'he despises me;' and I ceased to esteem myself. Having no person to love, my whole mind was filled with hatred; vengeance stretched out its arms to me, and I precipitated myself into them. A word from thee, Ludwig, had it been even the bitterest reproach, had withheld me. Ah! why, why avoid me with such coldness, with such contemptuous indifference?'

Friedleben was plunged in reflection.

'Thou art right,' cried he at last; 'I wanted to be more than a man: I thought it was more meritorious to love virtue than my friend. I was, what I am too often even now, an enthusiast, who forgets the men with whom he has to live, to run after chimeras. Thou knowest me, Wahlen, well then! I am not yet corrected; I am the same Ludwig who wanted, who wants still to direct every thing. What unnecessary sacrifices have I made throughout life! yet I have forgot them all, except that of thy friendship. Wahlen, during thirty years of absence, that wound of my heart has not ceased to bleed. How often did I languish to return to thee! 'but,' said I, 'he cannot love me more; I should only humiliate him.'

'Ah, Ludwig! why not return to thy friend?'

'I thought I loved thee no longer, Wahlen; thy se-

cret has cost me large sums. I wished at any price to force thee to repair thy wrongs; but to-day, when I beheld thee before me, confounded and humiliated, my heart felt all the attachment which united us formerly. I could have wished to press thee to my heart as in the days of our youth and innocence; and, in spite of me, I felt myself repelled. 'He trembles before a man—before an unknown,' thought I with grief; 'he who never trembled formerly but at the idea of vice or crime.' I could not bear the thought; I was forced to go into the next room. Wahlen thou wouldst never have seen me again if the noble action of this angel who refused what legitimately belonged to her husband, had not softened thy heart. I have recovered my friend—I am no longer alone in the world. Say, Wahlen—is it true that I have found thee?'

'Canst thou doubt it?' cried the baron, embracing him. 'And I—I recover at once my Ludwig, my virtue, and my happiness. But acknowledge that thou shouldst not have abandoned me at the moment thou didst.'

'Ah my friend!' said Friedleben, 'that idea has been the torment of my life; I feel at present how much I was in the wrong. When I quitted thee, I was misled by the foolish notion that there existed men who were perfect; but did I deserve to meet with such? was I faultless myself?'

The two friends had completely forgotton that there were witnessses to their conversation; nor did they recollect it till my son-in-law said something to them. Having much to communicate, they went out, holding each others hand, and walking toward the garden.

'I believe,' cried young Wahlen to us, 'that we have still an interesting discovery to make. Friedleben, or Ludwig, is surely my mother's brother, that whimsical man of whom I have spoken to you sometimes, who is so rich, and who I thought hated me, because his sister had married my father. He wanted to marry her to an intimate friend; and, according to the con-

versation, we have just heard. I see it must have been to my uncle. My father, with whom he fought on that occasion, and who gave him the wound he has just now shown us, did not like him; he thought him an enthusiast, a sort of madman, who was possessed with the mania of domineering—and perhaps he thought right. But my mother has always spoken to me of him as an excellent man: she has told me often that he was very much attached to my uncle; and all I have now heard confirms me in that idea.

The two friends walked a long time in the garden together. At last they came in, the purest joy shining in their looks. Young Wahlen examined Friedleben with a scrutinizing eye. The latter smiled.

'My dear uncle,' cried the young man at last, 'I love your nephew, the husband of Elizabeth.'

'The son of my sister!' exclaimed Friedleben, pressing him in his arms.

He then went with him to Elizabeth, and affectionately said to them, 'yes, I am your uncle, your father, the brother of your good mother. I received the letter you sent to my agent's for me, to acquaint me with your marriage. On such terms as thou went with thy uncle, I was struck at thy project of espousing the daughter of a simple country clergyman, and I determined to become acquainted with thee, thy spouse, and her parents, without letting you know who I was. To my great satisfaction I found, what is met with so rarely, a family which was happy in moderation and virtue. I became attached to you, good father,' said he to me, 'but I fell into my old folly. I wanted to give a lesson to this young man; and while I was preparing every thing for that end, some wicked wretches have deprived these tender parents of a beloved son; and, contrary to my expectation, Elizabeth had already operated my nephew's conversion.'

Wahlen did not intirely comprehend the last part of his uncle Ludwig's discourse; he was therefore, inform-

ed of our Charles's fate; and he had, by the way, a remainder of the lesson intended for him.

'You know,' said Ludwig, 'that we are rich: it would be ridiculous to hide from you that you are so too. Do then as you shall think fit. As to me,' continued he, taking the baron by the hand, 'I have recovered, for the last period of my life, the happiness of my youth, and that sentiment I vainly sought elsewhere. I will enjoy repose in the bosom of friendship, and you will enjoy it too. There is no harm in our Charles seeing a little of the world; in a few years he will come home, and you will see him rich and contented. I have taken measures for it. In the meantime, I go to Berlin to fetch Mina; and then, my dear baron, I am thine till death.'

He related to us afterwards what we might be allowed to know of his life; and, during an interval when the baron was gone out, told us something of his history also, and of the cause of their quarrel.

Baron von Wahlen had been passionately in love with the sister of his friend Ludwig, who desired their union, being ignorant of her loving the younger brother of his friend a long time before. He learned it; and, in consequence of a violent scene, which occurred, fought with the young man, and was wounded. Shortly after his sister secretly espoused the man she preferred, on which the elder baron, grown furious and desperate, accused his friend of having deceived him, and vowed against his brother a rancorous hatred that filled the good Ludwig with horror.

Not being able any longer to esteem the man he had so sincerely loved, he could not bear to live under the same sky, and therefore set out for the Indies, where he remained many years, and made a considerable fortune. He returned to his country, hoping that time had moderated the passion and wrath of his friend, but found that his brother-in-law and sister were dead, without the baron having ever pardoned them; and that he had enriched

himself by ruining them, was married, and had a son, whom he wanted to enrich in like manner, at the expense of his nephew.

It would be useless and tedious to tell the reader what means he employed; they succeeded. His hatred was active; and his brother did not defend himself. An attorney was bought over; a will secreted, a deed of trust purloined, and all the fortune of the family ensured to him. The death of his son was his first punishment: it was a terrible one. His remorse was the second. He thought to quiet this by adopting the nephew he had so unjustly deprived of his fortune. Ludwig on that account remained silent. The injustice was about to be repaired; but at the crisis of the young man's marriage, concluding that this event would cause a rupture between the uncle and nephew, sufficient for ever to deprive the latter of his legitimate fortune, he laid himself down to recover it for him.

By dint of money and perseverance he got the attorney to confess all, and only watched for an occasion to speak feelingly to the old baron, and make him restore every thing. We have seen how that occasion arose and how a happy reconciliation was the consequence.

During this recital Elizabeth seemed very uneasy. When he was done, she said to him, gently—'you should have spared your old friend a little more.'

'What!' cried he, 'should an honest man extenuate the truth to spare any one?'

'It were very unfortunate,' observed she, 'if one could not conciliate truth with the tender deference due to friendship.'

'No,' replied Friedlebeo; 'nothing should induce us to hide the truth from a friend or a hardened sinner.'

'I grant it,' said Elizabeth; but we should tell it with the same caution we would to a dying person. Would you say a harsh truth to any body on their death-bed? and are we not all walking on the borders of death? who

assures you that being, you have just now wounded and humiliated, will exist to-morrow?'

'Thou art perhaps right, dear good girl; and there is only one truth I will henceforth say to you without reserve, and that is, I love you with all my heart.'

CHAP. XVI.

Mina.

Some days after these gladdening occurrences my wife and I returned home, and friend Friedleben, or, as we now called him, uncle Ludwig, set out for Berlin. We were content. Happiness opens the soul to hope, as misfortune does to fear.

We were scarcely returned, when my wife sat down at a table, and began quietly to look over a map of the earth.

'He will return—our Charles will surely return,' said she, with her sweet smile; the Indies are not so far from us.'

I traced to her with my finger, the long voyage to the East Indies round Europe and Africa. 'Look,' said I; 'here is Stade, and there is Madras.'

'But why,' demanded she, 'do they not rather go by land, which seems to be much shorter?—why expose themselves to the dangers of a long navigation? explain that to me.'

'Because the men of those countries, dear Augusta, are more cruel and dangerous than the sea; and perhaps they may say as much of the europeans, who carry war and slavery among them. Ah!' exclaimed I, in a holy movement of indignation, 'why must the greatest enemy of man, be man?—why, during his short passage on this globe of sorrows, can he not soften them by living at least in peace with his fellow creatures?—are there not enough of evils incident to human nature?—contagious sickness, earthquakes, floods and fires. And must man still exceed in cruelty those destructive plagues?—nature but seldom exercises her devastating fury, while man is constant only in spreading around him desolation and death.'

'But,' said my wife to me, trembling at the direful picture, 'God surely regards this little spot we inhabit with especial benevolence; there are none of the misfortunes thou speakest of, to be met with in it. But in that my Charles inhabits at present—' added she, laying her finger on the equator.

'God can also bless that,' replied I, in order to tranquillize the innocent good mother. 'Doubtless, among the barbarous mortals I have been speaking of, there are to be found, in the most savage countries, simple good men, worthy of the divine benevolence; tender husbands, respectable fathers of families, and humane masters.—Every thing is compensated here below, my dear wife; the whole is directed by a wise, just and good Father; and our son is under his protection in the Indies, equally as much as if he were in this village.

'There are good people in it then?' replied she. 'Let me enjoy that consoling reflection, it gives me fortitude to look calmly on the spot where my Charles is perhaps now.'

It was not surely that alone which contributed to the tranquillity of my wife; Elizabeth's good fortune made her hope the like for Charles.

'He will return,' cried she, in the accents of confidence.

'Yes, surely,' said I, with the same firm hope; 'all our children are good and virtuous, and God will bless them as he has blessed Elizabeth.'

We took a mutual resolution to oppose resignation and hope to the crosses that fate might have reserved for us; and the occasion for putting this in practice was not long before it offered.

Here are some letters from Mina, which her sister communicated to us, unhappily too late.

LETTER I.

'Behold me then, dear sister, in my *new world*, as you call it; and I protest that I find myself as much at my ease as if I had passed my life in it. I had represented it to myself such as I have found it, and nothing I have seen has appeared extraordinary to me. The *great world*—ah, my Elizabeth! it is, whatever it may be termed, one of those phantoms that frighten at a distance, and vanish as you approach. *Great!*—I should be glad to comprehend in what its greatness consists. For my part, I have been able hitherto only to have seen a *great* deal of littleness, a *great* deal of nonsense, and often a *great* deal of vexation to those persons who want to cut a figure in it, without knowing how to laugh at every thing, like thy Minette.

'It is in vain that I look for greatness. The objects that we are near, rarely appear great to us. You see a thousand little particulars too close—a thousand shades of character that usually disappear in the medium of some centuries, or at the distance of some hundreds of miles. The hero of history, whom we admire, would often appear very little to us if we lived with him. Believe my Eliza, that there is more true greatness in the reality of our friendship, than in all the vain parade of what is styled the *great world*.

'Thou dost not know mankind,' said our good father to me; and this *knowledge of mankind* is another of those words that impose upon us before they are well considered. There are, doubtless, simple, uninformed beings who live among other men without observing them, or even reflecting upon themselves; and whose whole existence is confined to drinking, eating, sleeping, and acting like mere machines. But I find that mankind are in the main alike every where; the same passions, the same motives guide or bewilder them in all places: and this *knowledge* of mankind is neither very rare nor very difficult. It is the knowledge of one's self that is the most essential, and for which we are oftenest at a loss. Every body judges of the position of his neighbor pretty exactly, sees the faults he commits, and the line of conduct he should pursue; yet is astray in what regards himself personally. Even when he knows what he himself should do, he will not; for vanity, ambition, or false shame, and sometimes, perhaps, an excess of virtue oppose obstacles to it.

'I am then much less afraid of being deceived by others than by my own heart. She who lets herself be deceived, falls, because she desires it; it happens from weakness or prepossession much oftener than ignorance.

'Since you will know it, I will give you some account of my introduction.

'The count of Herbroug was extremely polite to your Minette.—'I am charmed to see you in our house, miss,' said he, examining me, perhaps a little too earnestly;—'you are recommended to me very highly, and your youth is no disadvantage, as you will become the friend of my daughters more easily—and it is a friend I wish to give them. You know english, I understand, very well; and as I intend sometimes visiting the country, from which that language takes its name, I desire them to learn it. You have only lived in the country, and our manner of life may appear a little strange to you in the beginning, but you will soon grow accustomed to it; and we

will instruct you in what can only be acquired in the great world—the art of pleasing and being happy.

'He said a good deal more to me in the most agreeable manner, without seeming to remark the timidity of the poor village lass, who listened in silence with her eyes cast down. He added some compliments upon my countenance, and conducted me to his children, two charming little girls, of six or seven years of age. Lady Herbrong repeated in the evening exactly the same things, compliments apart; and from that moment I have been one of the noble family, where, I assure you, I am not too much out of my proper place.

'I have observed minutely how the countess dresses, and have imitated her as well as I could. I have listened to all the pretty compliments the count addressed to me. I smile at them, and repeat them on occasion; and nothing more was requisite to make them look upon me as a charming little body who had acquired at once the manners of good company.

'My lord is very rich, and his house is one of the most fashionable in Berlin. His wife passes for handsome, and is so in effect; only her countenance wants the gentle expression which embellishes my Elizabeth. I have seen her sometimes ravishingly beautiful, and that is when she plays with her children. In company she strives to appear cold, and gives herself an air of haughtiness and disdain that but ill becomes her.

'The count is reckoned an agreeable man. He possesses the talent of amusing in a high degree; but he affects a tone of irony with respect to every thing that is great and sublime, which would frighten me if it were really his manner of thinking. He is, after all, I believe, much better than he would seem. For instance—he loves his wife. He is even a little jealous, and yet affects an indifference for her in public that never goes beyond mere politeness.

'Ah, my Elizabeth! thy Wahlen is not of *this great world!*—in which, however, fate had placed him, but from

which he was withdrawn by love to settle in a little world, where a good husband dares to love his wife, and let her see it.

'Count Herbroug reduces every thing to system.—'All the art of society,' said he to me one day, 'consists in incommoding nobody, and letting nothing incommode us.'

'He has passed some months in England, and is what is called here an Anglomaniac. He speaks english indifferently enough; but in revenge, copies assiduously the english dress and style of living: and all the individuals of that nation who make a tower of Europe, are well received at his house

'I confess, dear sister, that what I most feared in my new vocation, was to be humiliated; however, it is so much the reverse, that I have uniformly experienced a great deal of attention, which I cannot attribute to any merit of mine, since they have shown it me from the first moments; it is therefore an effect of their natural politeness, and proves the goodness of their hearts. I accompany them every where in their fine carriage. They will have me go with them to every party, and I am every where well received. I do not find it hard to adapt myself to the mode of living of the rich, which I find very convenient and agreeable, whatever the philosophers may say from Diogenes down to Charles, inclusively.

'I amuse myself infinitely in eathing the leading characteristics of the different individuals with whom I converse; serious with one, sprightly with another—now I laugh, another time I argue. There is nothing but sentiment at which I do not play; but of doing that I am incapable; and my own feelings have nothing to do here. I observe and amuse myself at the expense of all those folks who think themselves so knowing; and I assure you, Eliza, they do not deserve better. This serves to divert me a little from my habitual reflections: but, dear Elizabeth, how often, amid the bustle of the frivolous multitude, and these conversations of mere words, do I regret the delightful conversations when our hearts understood and responded to each other so sweetly!

that it is necessary to make the most of one's situation; and not unfrequently among those volatile, insignificant beings, I meet with amiable and enlightened men: those I can listen to, and thus pass some very agreeable moments. But the mind alone enjoys it, and there is nothing for the heart. I almost believe that, without the emotion occasioned by high play, the hearts of all these people would soon forget to beat: mine, however, does not, as I think unceasingly of my Elizabeth.

'The bundle I send with this, will give you some idea of your friend's costume.

'I do not know why, but my family name is not to their taste; they have frenchified it, and call me nothing but miss Renverot—or, in the house, miss Mina.

LETTER II.

'Happy Elizabeth! in the society of thy husband and thy child, thy soul is alive to the enjoyment of all its faculties!—thou each instant feelest the value of thy existence; thy looks light only on objects dear to thy heart! here it is of no use to have one:—*love, friendship, mutual sacrifices!*—hardly are these words known, or at least they are not understood in their true signification. An englishman, who has been here a short time, is the only person that appears to comprehend me when I happen to mention them; and even he, but it is sometimes with an air of surprise mingled with doubt.

'When this gentleman, whose name is Lisborne, was introduced, the count presented me to him as a half-countrywoman. He spoke to me politely in english, and paid me the compliment of saying that I could pass for an englishwoman. We chatted a long time together, and he appeared to take a pleasure in my conversation, doubtless because I spoke his language.

'But why dissemble to my Elizabeth what I do not to myself? why not tell her frankly that an Englishman seemed to think Miss amiable, exclusive of englishd

'Well, we spoke german too; and when he quitted me, I perceived his looks continually directed towards my side. Since then he seeks all occasions to approach me, and shew me both a preference and esteem. Why should I not also confess to thee that he occupies my vanity, but only my vanity, in a very agreeable manner?

'Without having lost the stamp of his nation, he is polite and very amiable; his face is handsome, and it is easy to see that he has always lived in the best company. In general, his conversation is energetic, and at the same time witty; and, on the whole, he is what all men should be—at once amiable and solid.

LETTER III.

'We are going to pass six weeks in the country, dear Elizabeth, at a little estate of the count's in Silesia. It appears to me as if M. von Herbstag had projected this little journey on purpose to give me pleasure; at least he wanted to make a merit of it to me at each.—'You shall no longer complain,' said he to me, 'that you never hear the nightingale: my woods are full of them; and I hope to hear, for once the expression of acknowledgment from that ungrateful heart which can only love nightingales.'

'His wife laughed, and confirmed to me that it was on my account alone he proposed this party, for which she cared very little. As to herself, said she, jesting, she did not know what pleasure people could find in climbing mountains, over rocks and stones that tear one's feet, or in burying one's self in ugly woods, that are so dark, one cannot see the way, where one is suffocated for want of air, and which resemble the haunts of robbers!

'The count delighted the country warmly, and gave me an inviting description of his little paradise, situate at the foot of a mountain in a romantic valley.

'Nothing obliges you,' said he to the countess, 'to climb those rocks, so sufficate in these forests. Miss Mina, who is not afraid of it, and I, who love it to a folly, will make our excursions together.'

'I replied nothing to this project, but expressed my gratitude to the count and countess for the pleasure they intended me; and I am really charmed with it. I do not agree with lady Hertwig in the least: it is in the city that one is sufficated, and we breathe only in the woods. My head is light with joy to think that I shall find myself in the country once more. The countess is very glad of it too, since I have made her comprehend how useful a short stay in the country would be to her children.

'The dear little things are jumping with rapture; and we set off in two days, all well planned with the journey.

'Lisbeane alone seems to me to disapprove the journey totally, since it has been resolved on, he is become thoughtful and contradicting. He who was accustomed to extol the beauties of nature, now turns my taste for the country into ridicule.

'Have you ever,' said he, 'heard of the ancients making the eulogium of a fine point of view? have not all the great philosophers lived in cities? and did not even your divine Socrates himself say that there was nothing to be learned from trees or fields, and that it was on that account he chose to live in a city?'

'It appeared to me rather ill-timed to draw down the ancients in a discussion upon the preference to be given to town or country. I know not whether he meant to banter me upon my taste for the ancients, or the countess upon her predilection for the city; but I soon perceived he was speaking very seriously, for he became quite ill-

[illegible] not being able to put off that journey; and indeed I should be very sorry if he could.

'Adieu, Eliza!—I will write, if I can, from *Valberg*, which is the name of that little estate where we are going. Think in the meantime of the pleasure that Mina will have in breathing the pure air of the country also.

LETTER IV.

'How now, my dear Elizabeth!—is it thus you are inclined to think of your Mina? you imagine I speak in such terms of Lisborne, only because I am disposed in his favor; and such a passion makes you tremble, because he is an englishman, because he is rich, and does not speak to me on the subject—for every thing is a cause of apprehension to you.

Well then, dear Elizabeth, listen and fear no longer for thy sister's heart, but tremble for her fate. Thy tender solicitude at length tears from me a secret—alas! the only one I have ever had with Elizabeth. I love——and it is not Lisborne. When you thought I was struggling against doubts of the immortality of the soul, I was struggling against an unhappy love—a love that I should not, and would not confide to you.

'When I fainted in my brother's arms on new-year's day, it was because I had lost all hopes; and the weight of misfortune, and of a sentiment that would soon be a crime, fell upon my heart, and crushed it, I had, however, the strength to hide from you all that I felt. Thou knowest, Eliza, I had like to die.

'Well, then, I love him still, Eliza, and I am still unhappy: I shall never cease to be so, and to love him. You will not continue, after this avowal, to believe that I love Lisborne, whatever may be the manner in which I speak of him; but all my conduct, all that appears giddiness to you, is nothing but the result of the manner in which I,

regard this life. No; I cannot consider it like Charles, as a school of privation, a state of trial, and often of martyrdom; or, like Eliza, as the eve of a day of rejoicing, during which we are to prepare ourselves for the splendid morrow, without thinking of the present.

'To my mind, life is already the festival. Formerly blessed with thoughtless innocence, gaiety, the tenderness of my parents, and thy friendship, my Elizabeth, I saw and imagined nothing but pleasure and happiness, and I still believe that it is what providence intends for us in this life. We are gifted with all the means of being happy—the beauties and treasures of nature, and senses to enjoy them—objects of attachment, and a heart to love them—the idea of perfection, and a mind susceptible of improvement.

'It is then almost always our own fault if we be not happy in this life. I have ceased to be so, by suffering a head-strong passion to subjugate my heart, but I have not for that altered my opinion. I should be more culpable still, if, abandoning myself to discouragement and sadness, I did not strive to enjoy the favorable moments that offer; but I will not profane this day of rejoicing, Elizabeth. However different our manner of considering life, the disposition of our hearts is the same; we would both prefer death to a bad action, or even a bad thought. —'There is nothing shameful in death,' said our friend Socrates. Adieu, my dear Elizabeth.

LETTER V.

'Before I speak of the place I now inhabit, my dear Elizabeth, I will return a moment to the time of our setting out.

'The evening before, Lisborne had himself announced in my apartment, and entered with an air of sadness.

'You are envious of my happiness,' said I to him, laughing, 'so abridge your farewell.'

'You are mistaken,' replied he, seriously; 'no person in the world wishes you every happiness more sincerely than I do; and I should be charmed to know that you were to enjoy that of going to the country, but——'

'He looked round him with an air of embarrassment.

'I wish,' said he at last——' I must give you an advice, and may it follow you, like a tutelary angel, in those woods where you rejoice so much that you are going to hear the song of the nightingale, and respire the breath of spring. Ah, Miss! woods, nightingales, and spring are often dangerous.'

'I looked at him.

'What is it you mean to say, sir?

'He was silent for some seconds, then resumed——

'I know not how to tell you, and yet you should know it.'

'What should be known, mr. Lisborne, never can be told. Say it in whatever way you think fit: you have only to hesitate upon the necessity of acquainting me with what you have begun.'

'And really, Elisa, was not this beginning very extraordinary, and almost impertinent?'

'I hesitate, then, no longer,' resumed he, bowing. 'Herbroug loves you. You jest at his gallantry, and that perhaps is what augments his passion, and renders it stronger and more serious.'

'He expressed this with a sort of warmth he could not control, and stopped suddenly. He dared not say any more; but I easily guessed what he reserved from me.

'I am much obliged to you,' said I, smiling, 'but do not be under any uneasiness; if M. von Herbroug should call to his assistance ten thousand springs and flocks of nightingales, he would not become in the least dangerous. And now, mr. Lisborne, I beg you will speak to me no more about it.'

'He seemed to reflect with much confusion. 'Only one word more,' added he, hesitating. 'Herbroug, be assured of it, hopes from the country and solitude something of which your heart is not capable. That journey to his estate is a plan——'

'He interrupted himself, as if he feared to proceed.

'I shuddered, and held my tongue too. However, it came into my head to sound him a little more. His embarrassment, his dejected look, and his reserve appeared somewhat strange.

'I understand,' said I; 'but how could you have learned such a thing? has M. von Herbroug entrusted you with it?'

'This question which I put to him, looking at him stedfastly, increased his confusion; he stammered something which was not an answer. I repeated my question with more earnestness. He began to appear suspicious in my eyes, and I did not dissemble it.

'Chance,' said he at last, recovering himself a little. 'Some words fallen from the count, and the disgust he has so repeatedly manifested for the country—all that united, has given me some suspicions.'

'And the certainty?' demanded I, with the same earnestness.

'He hesitated for a minute; but suddenly drawing nearer to me, seized my hand with impetuosity, and raised it to his lips.

'Adorable girl,' cried he, 'I must then open to you this heart, which wished to remain concealed until I had rendered myself worthy of your confidence, and a return. I must then acknowledge to you that it is the purest and most violent love that has opened my eyes upon the passion of M. von Herbroug, and given me a certainty of his unworthy projects and guilty hope. I know your principles, and the strength of your mind, therefore I dreaded nothing; but it was insupportable to

me to think that the count could even have conceived such an idea. I sought to dissuade you from the journey without hinting to you what I knew. but I have attempted it in vain. Grief at being about to be separated from you, my uneasiness, and your danger have forced this declaration from me. Do not answer me, I conjure you; I should never have the strength to hear you pronounce a no—and I do not yet deserve a yes.'

'You will listen to me, however, sir,' said I, with a severity that I would not have permitted myself, if the method he had taken displeased me less. 'M. von Herbroug always seemed to jest, and I was void of all suspicion. But if you be not mistaken, he is henceforth the most contemptible of all beings in my eyes. For every thing else, mr. Lisborne, any passion that I might have the misfortune to inspire, were the person who felt it even the most estimable of men, cannot but be disagreeable to me, as I cannot pay it with a return. I love!

'He appeared exceedingly affected.

'You love!' said he to me, after a long silence, and with the most dismal voice. 'Might I dare not ask you if——'

'You can ask nothing, sir, for I dare not answer any thing. I confide to you the secret of my heart, because I esteem you.'

'He bowed profoundly, took my hand again, kissed it respectfully, and said—'my inquietudes are dissipated, but at what a price!'

'He sighed, and added, with a more natural tone—'you will soon return, I hope. Receive the farewell of a friend:' and he quitted me.

'I looked after him with a painful sentiment. I had found something in him that displeased me, without knowing why; yet his declaration had been expressed with all possible delicacy. But should he have chosen that moment? my declaration was without reflection. I want-

ed to put an end at once to his fears and hopes: but what opinion would he have of me? however, the calmness with which he left me, and his smile on taking leave, gave me pleasure. I thought little, very little about the count; I only promised myself to be discreet, and let him ramble among his woods and rocks by himself.

'Next morning we set out for Silesia. Since the conversation I had had with Lisborne, I was more attentive to M. von Herbroug's conduct, and several circumstances proved to me that Lisborne was right.

'I cannot express, my dear Elizabeth, how despicable this man appeared to me: under the eyes of his wife, to plan the seduction of a young girl to whose care he confided his own daughters! this painful idea haunted me for a long time, and I could not hinder myself from showing him a coolness that bordered perhaps too much on contempt.

'I cannot enjoy this paradise I so much desired; it appears to me to be polluted by the breath of a viper. However, so far as I can judge, the beauties of the place are even greater than what he gave me to expect. I have refused, absolutely, to go out with him, and have not ventured to take one solitary walk, but confine myself to some short excursions with my little pupils.

'To be better upon my guard, I have become more familiar with the countess; and upon a nearer view have discovered what I should never otherwise have suspected. Under a cold frivolous outside, she is a good, estimable woman; very capable of loving when she thinks herself beloved, but her noble mind is obscured in the foggy vortex of the great world.

'You will desire to know how we became intimate. Chance is often more favorable to reason than our own will, and I will tell you how it favored this event.

'I was walking one day in a grove near the house with my little friends; and while one was gathering flowers,

and the other running after butterflies, I sat down to read at the foot of a tree. The count came and profited of the moment to speak to me of my rigors and his love. I answered in a manner calculated to deprive him of all inclination to persevere in the same tone. He went away in confusion, and his wife shortly after appeared. By the crimson of her face, the animation of her eyes, and the tenderness with which she embraced me, I perceived that she must have been concealed behind some bushes, where she overheard every word of our conversation. Before that, I did not think her capable of shedding tears for her husband's perfidy, but I now saw that she had a proud and very susceptible heart.

'Since then, she shows me every mark of friendship, instead of the politeness with which she treated me previously. She is silent, it is true, and I also; but her caresses, and the striking change of her manner towards me, evince that until that moment she had trusted me as little as she did her husband. And do I not owe her some reparation for having innocently given her occasion to form such an idea? I do, therefore, all that I can to efface it intirely.

'Poor woman, how much she must have suffered! how much her heart must have undergone during all our conversations with her husband! and I—I only laughed and bantered him!

'Thou wert right, Eliza; the innocent gaiety of a young, unsuspecting girl has too often the air of coquetry in the eyes of those who do not know how to discriminate the different shades. The countess and I are now inseparable, and she has half reconciled me to her husband, whom she speaks of with a great deal of tenderness.—'He has no other fault,' says she, 'than his being a little inconsiderate.'

'And is it possible that this little fault alone can mislead the heart so far? yes, it is possible, but then the return to virtue is immediate.

'At first, the count rallied us about our being always together; but when he saw that we were likely to con-

time to do so, he insisted upon our return to town; and as we begged a little delay, has set off to Berlin without us. Behold me, then, alone with lady Herbroug, and at full liberty to ramble wherever I desire: but she does not like to walk far, and I prefer staying with her. Her heart discovers itself more tender every day. Alone with her lovely children and her friend, she seems more alive to the beauties of nature. I have studied her taste and disposition, and found a valuable heart under an external show of fashion, etiquette, and prejudices. We are so happy, that I dread returning to town. Adieu, my Eliza!'

LETTER VI.

'We are a week here, my dear Eliza, and I see with pleasure that the countess is resolved upon dedicating herself in future to the education of her daughters. She has already taken several little jaunts with us. I see the count very seldom, but then I have seen Lisborne again with pleasure. He has now a more natural tone, just like a plain friend.

'My little journal has then amused thee, my Elizabeth? the journey has amused me much more. I know no greater pleasure than travelling, excepting only one, which is, thy peaceful life in the country with him thou lovest.

'I scarcely read any thing now but voyages and travels that Lisborne lends me. He has himself travelled through the greater part of Europe, and his descriptions are as interesting as the best written book. Indeed, dear sister, you injure him; he is a very worthy young man. Listen.

'One morning very early, while I was still undressed, I heard a light tap at my door, which opened before I had time to bid the person come in. It was Lisborne in a travelling dress.

'After having hastily saluted him, I made him a sign to sit down, and ran into my closet to adjust myself.

'I was displeased at his coming so familiarly at a moment he should expect to find me alone. He seemed to guess my thoughts, and said to me, ingenuously—'I have chosen this moment to see you on purpose, because I knew I should find you by yourself. I set off to-day to meet a valued relative, lady Gower, a cousin of mine; but I wanted, before my departure, to speak to you of a thing that weighs upon my heart. You love, Mina?

'I attempted to interrupt him, but he continued with calm frankness—

'I have not a right to demand whom you love, but at least your friend has a right to put one question to you. Why are you not happy?—I love you, Mina! I feel I shall never cease to love you; but I no longer pretend to a return. I cannot obtain your hand, but I can be a brother to you—a friend; and that is a great deal.'

'He kissed my hand with tenderness and respect.

'You have told me but one word—I love!—and you pronounced it with an expression of sadness that proves you are not happy. Why then are you not! I am rich, too rich; but, my friend, I shall not only be rich—I shall be happy, if I can contribute to make you so. I have powerful friends in England and Hanover; and as you are a native of the territories our king possesses in Germany, I might perhaps be able to remove the obstacles which probably——I beseech you tell me why you are not happy? why have you accepted a situation which is beneath you? suffer me to aid in rendering you happy, and I too shall be happy myself. Say—what prevents you from being so?'

'The tears streamed from my eyes. At that moment love, money, and influence were at my command, and yet I could not be happy.—'Generous man,' said I to him in a low voice, 'nobody can assist me!'

'He persisted with a friendly indiscretion, entreating me to reveal the cause of my sorrow. But was it possi-

ble? Elizabeth, could I articulate—'I love, and am not loved?'

He appeared at length persuaded that there was some secret in it which could not be disclosed. He looked at me some moments in silence; then said, with a tone of suspense—'but is it indeed true that you love?'

'I replied in a decided tone—'ah, yes! it is indeed too true!'

'He cast down his eyes, and sighed; then turned the conversation to other subjects without making mention any more either of his love or his generous offers. He talked to me a great deal about his cousin and the nobleness of her disposition, her enthusiastic, elevated mind, her warm, feeling, heart; and said he hoped to prevail upon her to come to spend some time at Berlin.

'She is of a very melancholy turn,' said he, 'and I dare not flatter myself that she will go into company; but I can procure her an acquaintance,' added he, kissing my hand, 'of whom she will immediately appreciate the value.

'He has inspired me with a great deal of curiosity to see such an interesting woman. She travels to divert herself from the melancholy of an unhappy love. Dear Elizabeth, if I too could travel?

'He took leave of me, and I bade him farewel with much emotion. May heaven protect and recompense him!—he also is unhappy like me, and from a similar cause; but how much greater is his firmness!'

LETTER VII.

'We shall not see our Charles again for a long time. I have just received a letter from Annette, to whom our parents wrote from Stade, where they are gone to bid him a last adieu before he quits Europe. Oh Elizabeth,

He who was the joy and happiness of his family, must go, and I; I, see nobody go without regret. It seems to me that I am a poor swallow in a cage that beholds its companions take flight, hears their songs of delight at their departure, and is unable to follow them. Poor Charles! I am much deceived if his heart also be not wounded, and he do not carry with him beyond the seas the image of the amiable Juliet. Thou saidst once, dear Elizabeth, to our good father—'*your children are destined to love!*'

'If it were I that was embarked, he would have said to me—'thy grief will wear away in another part of the world;' and I would have believed him, and run after this hope from one part of the world to the other. Yes, alas! it would be in vain! poor Charles! God be with him, and restore him to his friends!'

LETTER VIII.

'I can bear it no longer, dear sister—I must go. It is not easy to live with people who do not love us; and it is still more difficult when they have. Sympathy of generous minds, how narrowed is thy circle! man is only well in the limited sphere of his family, where love was born with himself in the hearts of each dear relation. The friendship which begins at a more advanced age, is like a plant sowed too late; the autumnal cold, the least alteration of the weather, nips it ere it flowers.

'Lady Herbroug's heart and mine have sprung to meet each other with warmth, only to recede with greater coldness than ever. It might have been partly my fault, Elizabeth; I have contributed to it, perhaps, as much as she. I have allowed myself more familiarity than I should have assumed. I have forgotten the difference between our rank and circumstances. I wished to render happier a wife who adores her husband, and who was separated from him only by the tyranny of the great world.

'To bring him back, I persuaded her to assemble in their own house a society of some select friends; in whose company, while they witnessed their children's progress, they would enjoy the purest delight in the reach of mortals. This succeeded extremely well at first: the count took a taste for this kind of life, and the company of plainer, better, and more moral persons than his ordinary acquaintances.

'There was more of confidence and friendship in these agreeable parties; his paternal love awakened, and brought him back to her to whom he owed the sweet sentiment.

'One day after a scene, in which his heart was moved, and seemed to expand with conjugal love, I threw myself into the arms of my friend, and exclaimed—'oh how happy shall I be when I behold you both so!'

'She disengaged herself from me peevishly, reddened, and said—'I thank you most humbly, miss; but must I then have occasion for you, to become happy?'

'I looked at her with astonishment, but calmly.

'To whom am I to be indebted for that happiness?' continued she. 'To whom am I to be indebted for my husband's return? to you alone; and I am not to look in his heart for the motives that bring him back. There is more bitter than sweet in such a return. I acknowledge, I feel your friendship, Mina; but I can excuse it.'—Saying this, the distance of her manner increased.

'Since that moment, almost a fortnight ago, our hearts have become colder; every attempt towards intimacy has only removed us farther asunder. When her husband was in love with me, she was not jealous; but she is become so since he shows no more particular attention to me; and watches with uneasiness every mark of consideration he pays me. I ask myself if I should be like her, were I in her place. I believe not. She hates me because she dreads affording a triumph to my vanity. But

how much she deceives herself! I am much more humiliated than vain of the passion with which I inspired the count; yet, perhaps, in examining my heart, I might discover that I placed too much vanity in bringing him to reason. However, I was stimulated also by a sincere desire for her happiness. I loved her sincerely, and I do so still. If she knew the purity of my heart, she would not accuse me of the smallest desire of affecting a triumph.

'I must leave this—I feel I must. She might finish by hating me, and I should be sorry for it. When I shall be no longer here, she will think with regret of her she now repulses. Thou shalt soon know more of it.'

LETTER IX.

'Lisborne is returned with his relation, a young lady of about twenty-six. She resides here completely *incognita*, and lodges in a retired quarter; but did me the honor of coming to see me one day when the family was at court. To say the truth, she did not please me in any extraordinary degree. Lisborne had much vaunted her sensibility and mild disposition to me; but I found something so stiff in her manner, that it checked my heart in spite of me. She spoke to me with rapture of the pleasure of travelling, and mentioned that she intended to go to Italy in autumn, through Switzerland, and pass the winter at Naples. Lisborne, who was present, gave, with his customary vivacity, a delicious description of those countries; and for the first time in my life I was tempted to envy another's riches.

'During the visit I returned lady Gower, she showed me several drawings of Switzerland and Italy; and I will not hide from thee, my dear Elizabeth, that I secretly wished she would propose to me to accompany her. Indeed, she seemed sometimes to be on the point of asking me. I should not be very loth to accept the invitation.

'She has gained much in my opinion since the few opportunities I have had of seeing her. She treats me with a friendship and confidence I am far from deserving; but which I owe, I suppose, to the favorable notions Lisborne has given her of me.

'Although the principal feature in her character be, as I was informed, a profound sensibility, and enthusiasm, she has moments of gaiety that astonish me; but this gaiety wears the stamp of her nation, who, it is said, carry every thing to the extreme. She indulges in it with a freedom which, were she one of my countrywomen, would appear to me to pass the bounds of decency. But before Lisborne she conducts herself with extreme reserve; and is, in his presence, modest, serious, and even sad. This difference may proceed from the respect she entertains for him, or perhaps it springs from a delicate sentiment that reminds her she owes to herself and her sex, not to give herself up before a man to fits of mirth that always derogate from the dignity of a woman.

'But she makes herself amends when we are alone, and then laughs at her ease. It is with difficulty I can reconcile this gaiety with what I know of the state of her heart and circumstances.

'Lady Herbroug's coolness, or rather distance towards me, is at its height. Lisborne himself has been struck at it. He spoke to me of it yesterday in such a manner, as to leave me no doubt of her hatred. I wanted to justify her.

'Ah!' cried he to me, 'if you take her conduct under your protection, I must indeed hold my tongue. Lady Herbroug is not so generous as you; and I must needs confess to you, my dear friend, that your generosity would look more like affectation, were I ignorant that you know only a small part of the injury she may do you.'

'I did not think to ask him any question; he has, however, said enough to make me comprehend what kind of advice he would have given me had I asked any. He certainly wishes me to quit this house; and I can-

not but acknowledge the delicacy with which he manages it, and leaves me the care of choosing what part I shall take myself.

'I must confess, dear Elizabeth, that his zeal for my interest, and the delicacy of his proceedings—in fine, his whole conduct, render him every day more amiable in my eyes; and if he continue to act with the same nobleness of sentiment and manner, he may perhaps succeed in eradicating from my heart a passion against which I thought that no person, nor length of time, could avail.

'Ah, Eliza! there are in the heart recesses so profound, as to be impervious even to the eye of tender friendship. There are instants when my soul sinks, from thinking it can never find in this world the object of the vague and indeterminate desires that occupy it: instants when I languish to quit this life, in order to seek, in the immortality which lies beyond it, the means of curing my burning, feeble heart. It seems to me, at such moments, as if my love had given place to thoughts and wishes of a more elevated nature, and that I am forlorn upon the earth.

'My good sister, I have not been happy on it; I am not—I never shall. Even united to him I love, I could not be happy. My lot is composed of tears, sorrows, and the torment of loving without the probability of hope.

'I am in the most cruel incertitude respecting what I should do. Should I remain here, or should I go? in whom can I confide? can I rely upon the man who loves me, and whom I do not love yet? and why can I not love him? I could wish at times that there were some truth in the fables of love philters and thessalian sorceresses; with what pleasure would I quaff the oblivious draught!

'If attachment to a worthy man cannot produce the same effect, what other hope remains for me? Lisborne is certainly a worthy, an excellent man.

'Elizabeth—I cannot stay any longer.'

CHAP. XVII.

A real misfortune.

My wife and I had reciprocally promised each other to oppose calm patience to the strokes of fate; in the gloom of night to look forward to the beautiful Aurora of the coming morn, and at each rugged hill we should have to climb to think upon the blooming valley that lay on the other side.

'Are we not at least sure,' said I to her, 'that there is a shady valley ready for us, where we cannot be disappointed of repose? I mean the tomb. In the misfortunes of life, when human succor is of no avail, this certainty is a consolation.'

'Yes, dear friend,' continued I, 'if man were deprived of the hope of death, he would be to be pitied indeed. If the limits of life were for us what the boundaries of their empire were to the antient romans misfortune would be more terrible than were at Rome the tyrants seated upon the throne of the Cæsars.'

'And love,' observed Augusta to me tenderly, 'love shares with death the divine power of consoling humanity, and enabling it to endure its troubles. How often has it come to our assistance? when we shall have our Charles, I do not see what we shall have to apprehend so vexatious. We are poorer at present than our Elizabeth is rich. Lewis might become, it is true, something better than an apothecary; but the harm is not great, if he be always an honest man.'

This reflection of my wife, in itself so good and simple, sufficed to freeze me completely: it arrested my imagination in its flight; and from soaring among the sublime ideas of eternity and the Roman empire, drew it down into an apothecary's shop.

'I had sometimes thought of late, I must acknowledge, with a sort of shame upon our son the apothecary; especially when I was just returning from the house of my daughter, the baroness; but I had never the courage to avow it like my wife, and was humiliated at it.

'Certainly,' said I, with a little peevishness, 'if he make an honest man, I shall be thankful to God; but—but that is not to the purpose at present.'

'And what is, then?' replied the good mother with her usual simplicity. 'Of what should we speak, if not of our children? what other happiness, what other misfortune have we to hope or fear, but what concerns them?'

I remained silent, being somewhat ashamed of my petulance, when, at the moment, somebody rapped at the door. It was a messenger from Friedleben with a letter. I opened it, and saw the signature of Ludwig.

It contained only a few lines; but surely they were heart breaking lines to read.

'Mina is gone! the reports respecting her flight are so contradictory, that I cannot form any judgment yet. What is certain is, that she is in the hands of a rich profligate. But can it be voluntarily? it is to be hoped not. I am upon her traces, and you will soon have news from me.'

I read this letter to myself, but, nevertheless, my wife saw, by the alteration of my countenance, that it announced a misfortune. She turned pale.

'Charles! our poor Charles!' exclaimed she fearfully.

'It does not regard Charles,' said I to her, 'but what it declares is no less distressing. Mina——Mina has quitted count Herbroug's.'

'Ah, God be praised!' cried she, coming to herself, 'that is what we desired.'

'True; but Friedleben does not know whither she is gone.'

Augusta took the letter, trembled as she cast her eye upon it, and was obliged to sit down.

'I hope,' said I, 'that matters are not so vexatious as these hasty lines would insinuate.'

My wife began again to read the note, dwelling upon the words that struck her most. *Flight——in the power of a rich profligate——voluntarily!*

This concatenation of ideas produced a terrible effect upon me. 'Voluntarily!' cried I. 'Good God! any thing, any thing rather than such a misfortune! if my heart must be broken, may it not be by the voluntary fall of one of my children!'

I snatched the letter, raising my eyes to heaven. Then a sudden impulse of indignation made me throw it on the ground at the idea of Mina being seduced. '*Voluntarily!*' cried I. 'But, no—that word is not in the letter.'

'But it is,' said Augusta, sorrowfully.

'Well, then, it is not in Mina's heart—no, it is not; but if it be,' cried I, lifting my hands towards heaven, in spite of my wife, who held me in her arms—'if it be

voluntarily, may the angel of malediction strike—my hand!'

'My love, my dear Charles,' cried my wife with the accent of despair, 'do not tempt God—do no pronounce the frightful word of malediction!'

'Let me alone—leave me!' said I; 'of what consequence is any thing to me in such a dire misfortune? thy love, Augusta, even thy love, and my other children? the whole world, life itself, would be of no importance to me, were Mina culpable!'

'And the tomb,' replied she with anguish, 'think of the tomb—think of what thou wast saying an instant ago.'

'Of the tomb! senseless woman! it awaits our guilty child likewise! with what presumption did I imagine that all the billows of misfortune broke as they reached the tomb!'

'Look, Augusta—see this word *voluntarily*!—its effects extend beyond the tomb, even to the utmost limits of existence. *Voluntarily* to become the prey of a villain!—to sell herself to sin!—no, death itself would not wash away that stain; it would be our shame to eternity!'

During all this, my wife had been making every effort to calm me, and separate my hands, which I held convulsively clasped together; but at these words, her arms fell destitute of force, and she cast upon me, sighing heavily, the fixed, vacant stare of a dying person. She tottered, and sunk upon a chair.

'What is the matter?—what ails thee?'—demanded I, terrified at her situation.

'Ah!' cried she, 'thou hast broken my heart! all is over for me! our Mina! she is then lost for ever to herself and us! her father, her own father has pronounced her condemnation!'

The accent of my poor wife, in thus feebly expressing her anguish, was that of unutterable woe.

I lost sight of the chain of dismal images that possessed my mind, to endeavor to give some consolation to my poor Augusta.

'I condemn my daughter!' cried I. 'God preserve me from it!—no; it is to an all-merciful father, who reads every heart, that I leave it to judge her. Even admitting the most grievous suppositions—even did she go off voluntarily, God will, no doubt, have compassion on her youth, and consider the struggles her heart must have undergone—her repentance—her regret, and the artifices of the wicked man who has seduced her. Ah, the wicked wretch! surely he must have been like the Bohemian whose history she left us, or the tempting spirit that seduced Eve. Eve was not more innocent than our Mina. She, the first and most perfect of women, was yet seduced and yielded in the days of her purity. But this misfortune is perhaps not true. Does not Ludwig say she did not go voluntarily? a stranger hopes it is otherwise; and shall we, who are her parents, not hope at all? shall we, who know our child, have a worse opinion of her than he has?'

What I was saying to my wife to console her, produced that effect upon myself; the fault of my child became attenuated in my eyes, and all my wrath turned to her seducer.

'Yes,' cried I, blinded by my passion, 'however rich, however powerful he be, what shall that merit?—an offended father easily finds the means of avenging his wrongs. He shall learn that the asylum of innocence is not to be violated with impunity.'

I took my hat and cane with the eagerness of fury, and was going out, but my wife reminded me that I did not even know which way to go, in order to find the seducer; and when she had composed me a little, made me recollect that I had not money enough to travel far, and observed that my enemy would easily escape by means of his riches.

'Even so,' cried I; 'there is a just God, and his hand will fall upon him.'

'Elizabeth perhaps may know more than we about it,' remarked my wife at the end of some minutes.

I grasped at this idea, ran to my desk, wrote, and sent my letter by an express. We received for answer the packet of letters I have just laid before the reader, and a note from Elizabeth, giving us better hopes.

We read Mina's correspondence with extreme avidity, and each letter successively gave us new reason to hope. The last affected us very much.

When we had done, we looked at each other with a pleasure mingled with grief; the heavy cloud that enveloped us during two days, was now no more than a light vapor, through which darted the rays of hope. We were, however, at a loss to reconcile Ludwig's information with Mina's letters; but our inquietudes, which were now almost dissipated with respect to her conduct, all settled upon her precarious fate.

In fine, Ludwig himself arrived. His physiognomy presaged nothing good.

'Where is she? where is our daughter?' cried we both together.

'I cannot tell,' answered he; 'I do not even know how I am to console you, dear, unhappy friends; but we must find out the villain, nevertheless.'

'Ah!' exclaimed I, 'if even Lisborne could'—— succor her, I was going to say, but Ludwig interrupted me.

'How have you learned his name?—yes, it is that monster, that Lisborne who has seduced and carried off that innocent creature!'

'No, no—that is impossible,' replied I; 'Lisborne thinks too nobly for that.'

He looked at me with an air of surprise. We showed him our letters, and he read them slowly with a great deal of deliberation, often making a gesture of indignation that frightened us.

'What a shame, that Lisborne is!' said he at last.—'Poor Mina! she little suspected it! might it be possible that she knew what I do, and that the two last letters were but a feint? then——'

'And what do you know, in the name of heaven?' cried we both.

'That lady Gower, that pretended relation to Lisborne, is a lost woman; a mistress who is intirely devoted to his purposes. Lady Herbroug discovered Mina's connection with that contemptible woman, and gave her advice; but, on the other hand, they had taken care to prejudice Mina against whatever the countess might say, and this last letter proves the innocence of your daughter. The villain, the monster, he shall not escape! vengeance betide him if I can overtake him! vengeance betide him if Mina is innocent! and a thousand times vengeance if she be guilty and seduced!'

In pronouncing these words, all his features expressed the workings of fury and indignation.

He related to me afterwards in private, yet cautiously, how lady Herbroug had not judged favorably of Mina; but what I had read concerning that lady in my daughter's letters, rendered me somewhat sceptical as to her judgment.

'Mina,' she had told him, 'knew very well that Lisborne was an unprincipled rake; he had that character wherever he was known.'

Ludwig had made inquiries in the house which had been occupied by the self-titled lady Gower, and there again it was confirmed to him that miss Bonverot knew Lisborne's character.

Our friend Ludwig soon after left us, to return in pursuit of Mina. Our incertitude was dreadful. If our daughter had entertained simply a desire to travel, as she expressed it in her letters, why quit Herbroug house secretly? why not write to Elizabeth? why not let us have some news from her since her departure? on the

other hand, we had her letters, in which she unfolded her innocent heart with so much ingenuousness. We began insensibly, however, to lose a great deal of the confidence in her innocence we derived from them. It every day appeared to us more likely that she had willingly gone off with her seducer, and every day this idea affected us more painfully.

This trying event brought on additional consequences equally injurious to our domestic happiness. An evil genius, under the form of Mina, troubled the good understanding that had always reigned between my wife and me. If she exclaimed against her daughter with any degree of violence, the poor girl appeared to me to be only unfortunate, and I took her part warmly. If on another occasion the reasons that made me presume she was culpable, presented themselves to my mind; and I said, in consequence, any thing harsh respecting her, my wife took her under her protection and reflected on me a part of her fault and our misfortune, because I had brought her to her uncle Frederic's, where she had met with novels, and because I had manifested principles concerning love which were not sufficiently rigid. They were no longer, as formerly, little disputes that terminated in a smile, a kiss, and an increase of tenderness; but bitter and repeated contradictions, that ended with a cold or taunting expression, and widened the breach between us every day.

'Augusta,' said I to her at last, 'why render our life thus insupportable? thou art innocent, and I also; must we be therefore reduced to desire one another's death, in order to pardon our misfortune reciprocally at that terrible moment when one forgets every thing? well, I could wish it were that moment; then Augusta thou wouldst remember only how much thou hadst loved me.'

She approached me, striving in vain to repress her tears.

'Ah, Charles!' cried she, 'is not my heart sufficient-

ly torn already? why will you justify Mina when I am afflicted at her fault? and why, at other moments, express yourself with so much harshness when you speak of her?'

'Why? because I love her—because I am her father, and thou her mother—because we know not whether she be innocent or guilty—because misfortune imbitters our hearts, and renders us harsh to one another. Thou no longer thinkest of mine, dear Augusta?'

She pressed me her hands and we promised mutually not to speak any more of the poor unfortunate, but to leave the decision of her fate to the supreme judge, and love each other as before. We adhered to this promise, but were not the less unhappy.

Where an intimate connexion exists, from a moment there is a point, a single point that must not be interfered with, any subject that is dreaded as a topic of conversation, embarrassment soon usurps the place of happiness.

My wife said no more to me concerning my daughter, but she had tears in her eyes continually; her voice was feeble and broken, like that of a sick person; she walked slowly and softly through the house as she did when Mina was sick, and had always a preoccupied, distracted air, as if she were considering where she should seek for something she had lost. When I said to her tenderly—'but what art thou looking for, love?'

'I do not know,' she would reply, and then began to search again.

A child in the neighborhood was much disfigured by the small-pox. On seeing it, she embraced our little grand-daughter, whom we had with us, crying fervently —'I wish her face was spoiled in the same manner.'

Thus the crime of an unprincipled libertine had in one instant destroyed our happiness; and the vile author of our ills troubled himself very little about the despair of a tender father and mother.

CHAP. XVIII.

Remembrance and regret.

During the first month of Elizabeth's marriage, we had not seen Salomon; since Mina was gone to Berlin, he had come but very seldom. To the despair which bewildered his reason, and was conducting him to vice, had succeeded, after his interview with Mina, a gloomy sadness in all his actions. Towards us his manner was not altogether cold, but he was timid, reserved, and silent. His visits were short, and we had not seen him for several weeks after Mina's elopement, when he returned and renewed his visits under different pretexts. We did not speak to him of the event that occupied us. He appeared also to be ignorant of it, until at last, one day that he had been sitting near an hour with his accustomed silence, he suddenly, and without the least introduction, asked—'how is miss Mina?'

I looked at him to see if he knew any thing of it. His countenance was agitated, and he lowered his eyes.

'We hope she is well,' answered I, sighing.

He rose up, and approached me.

'Is it then long,' inquired he, in a serious tone, 'since you received any letters from her?'

I observed him again, to guess what he would be at, and shook my head.

'My dear Pastor,' continued he, hesitating, 'I have had a letter from Berlin.'

'Oh, it is true!' said I, interrupting him; 'we know it already.'

'Is this true?' repeated he, with an altered voice.

I made an affirmative sign. He sighed, took his hat, returned to me, and pressed my hand, expressing a thousand wishes for her happiness.

'The man she is going to be married to is, they say, very rich.'

'*She is going to be married!*' this word gave me a little courage. 'Yes,' said I, 'he is rich.'

'I am told he is an englishman of respectability, and immensely rich. Your children are happy, mr. Pastor, and they merit it.'

These words opened all the wounds of my heart anew. I was thinking, on seeing before me this honest, interesting young man, who had been the object of Mina's attachment, 'ah! why is she not at present the happy companion of this virtuous young man? if she had remained peaceably under the paternal roof, it is probable he might have grown fond of her, and instead of being a wandering, dishonored fugitive, she might perhaps be settled near us in a manner at once happy and creditable.'

This idea made me forget every thing. I embraced him; and pressing him to my bosom, said, with mournful effusion of heart—'ah, my son, if thou but knew how much thou wast beloved by this poor, innocent soul—if thou hadst known it, perhaps nothing of all that would have happened——'

'I beloved—beloved by Mina!' cried he.

His astonishment surprised me. After the avowal which escaped from Mina herself, I thought I had nothing to tell him. But I now felt I was wrong and kept silence with painful embarrassment.

'She loves me then?' demanded he; 'was it true that she loved me? she told it me herself with the most endearing frankness, and I could not believe it; I ima-

gained it was only like dashing the fruit of knowledge from destruction. The haste with which she quitted me in an instant, her departure, and long absence, persuaded me there was nothing real in it; but since she has mentioned it to her father, I can no longer doubt it. Wretch that I am! how often since have I desired that it were true!'

'It is too late,' cried I; 'but still I cannot hide from you that Mina loved you, and that most tenderly.'

'And at present,' said he, striking his forehead, 'she thinks of me. Is she married yet?'

I was extremely at a loss what to reply. 'I know not,' answered I, hesitating. 'It is ... it is to an englishman, and I would have preferred ... she is lost to us; probably she will go with him to England; perhaps I may see her never ...'

Tears hindered me from proceeding. Salaman pressed my hand without speaking, and went out.

My reflections during the rest of the evening were painfully melancholy. My imagination presented me unceasingly with the picture of the happiness we should have enjoyed if Mina had been the wife of Salaman. It was in vain that I implored the influence of the *genius of good* that night. If he has some power to assuage common sorrows, his lulling balm has very little effect upon those of a father or mother who bewails their lost child.

CHAP. XIX.

The explanation.

Elizabeth came. I saw her alight, without having strength enough to stir from my seat to meet her.

"Here is our Elizabeth," said I to my wife, whom I heard sighing at intervals.

She uttered a cry of surprise rather than joy, and remained like me upon her chair. It seemed as if misfortune had deprived us both of motion.

Elizabeth opened the door softly, and stopped at the entrance. Her pale, dejected countenance was a mirror that reflected our sadness. Her eyes were swimming in tears.

We stretched out our hands without saying a word of welcome to our beloved daughter. She threw herself on her knees in the place where she stood.

"My sister is innocent!" cried she; "she is innocent, or we are too wretched!"

I know not why, but at these words the weight of our grief fell so rudely upon my heart, that I rose up, exclaiming, with the accent of despair—"hold thy tongue, I conjure thee; do not speak to me about her more; thou wouldst make me lose my troubled senses altogether!"

Elizabeth rose up, frightened at my action, and I fell back upon my chair in a state of inexpressible despondency. We remained thus almost an hour before we could embrace our good Elizabeth.

Her grief was milder than our's because she did not think her sister culpable; but when we told her that uncle Ludwig was not able to discover any trace of her, and that her reputation was lost, even though she were innocent, she was affected to such a degree, as to swoon away; and when she came to herself, the violence of her grief contributed to calm our's a little. Her imagination was constantly occupied with the image of her darling sister.

'Look,' cried she, 'here is the place she sat the last time I saw her. Yonder we used to work together. Here she would sit and read, and converse.

Salzman came again to see us in a few days. Elizabeth threw herself into his arms weeping. He had been loved by Mina, and she poured out her grief in his bosom.

He pressed her in his arms with friendship and tenderness, and learned by degrees the fate of our unfortunate daughter; but he still had it in his head she was married, only conceived it to be to a man of bad character, and against our consent; and we had not the strength to undeceive him. Besides, he was too discreet to put questions to us that might discover the truth in all its particulars.

We were all sorrowfully abstracted in our reflections, when we saw a countrywoman in a wretched dress cross the court-yard with a tottering step. I thought it was some sick beggar, and was going to give her an alms when the door opened, and she fell at our feet.

God of goodness! it was Mina!—it was our child. We did not know her at first in her disguise, and the poor girl was so much altered; but when we heard her exclaim—'Ah, my God! I faint—I am dying!' her voice reverberated to our hearts, and our eyes opened. We surrounded her instantaneously; my wife and I fell on our knees, and Salzman also. Elizabeth threw herself on her sister's neck, and Mina's trembling arms clasped around her, and in this manner, locked together, they both fell almost lifeless into our embraces.

When Mina recovered herself a little, she cast a wandering stare on every object, as if she knew not where she was; but by degrees remembering us all, she stretched out her hands in silence to her mother and me, and then to Salzman, and sunk again into her sister's arms. She seemed worn out with fatigue; so we led her to her chamber, where Elizabeth undressed her, put her to bed, closed the curtains and she fell instantly asleep.

Her sister insisted upon passing the whole night in an easy chair at her bedside. Salzman, too, wanted to stay, but we resisted his intreaties; he was beside himself, and repeated every instant—'she embraced me! did you not see it?—did you remark it?'

My wife and I could not close an eye the whole night. We rose at break of day, and returned to the bedside of our poor child. She was still asleep, and her repose was as profound as if she had not slept for several days.

We sat down near her bed, and began to speak of our fears and hopes, which latter was strongly supported by Elizabeth who had all along maintained that her sister was innocent.

At last Mina awoke. On seeing us around her a celestial expression shone in her countenance and animated her look. She presented us her hand, and we cried out, with the firmest confidence—'yes, thou art innocent!'

These words seemed to surprise her. She looked at us with astonishment, but without any confusion.

'I never doubted it,' said Elizabeth.

'How?' cried Mina; 'what do you mean? do you know already that I have been in the power of a villain? but it is impossible; I only knew it myself a few days.'

Mina had written both to us and her sister, giving us an account of her departure from Berlin, and every thing

that happened until the moment she effected her escape; but her letters had been intercepted. She resumed her history at the period Elizabeth ceased to receive them.

Lisborne had persuaded Mina that lady Herbroug was her enemy, which disposed her to quit her house; but fearing to return to the neighborhood of Salzman, she hoped lady Gower, who showed her the most flattering marks of friendship, would propose to take her with her to Italy; but her ladyship never mentioned it to her until the eve of her departure. Mina desired it too much not to accept the offer without hesitation, and only requested a few days to have our consent, and to prepare for the journey.

Lady Gower told her it was impossible to put off her departure. Lisborne arrived and both persuaded Mina that, situated as matters were, it would be better to take leave of the Herbroug family by letter, in order to avoid a disagreeable explanation and reproaches, and to set out immediately with lady Gower.

'Your relations,' said Lisborne, 'cannot but approve of your travelling with a woman of such respectability. Besides, you may write to them when you are going and I will undertake to send your letter, and forward you theirs until you can give them an address.'

Mina packed up her effects in the utmost haste, and at night wrote a letter to lady Herbroug, and another to her mother, which she gave to Lisborne, in order that they should [illegible] hand with greater certainty, and set out from [illegible] with the english lady.

She expected to go to Switzerland directly and thence to Italy; but lady Gower told her she was obliged to go to Hamburgh previously, in order to settle some affairs which might probably detain her a few weeks.

They arrived there accordingly, and went to live at a little country-house at the city gates, which lady Gower

hired, and where they lived at first very secluded. Mina was then tolerably happy, and wrote to her sister, giving proper directions for a letter to reach her.

At the end of fifteen days Lisborne came to Hamburgh. He was somewhat embarrassed when Mina asked him why he had left Berlin. He hesitated, stammered, and ended at last by avowing that he had been forced to quit it in consequence of an affair he had had with count Herbroug on Mina's account.

She was extremely concerned at it; and her concern augmented when she heard lady Gower propose to her cousin to stay with her, and to accompany them on the journey to Italy, without its being at all posible for her to object to it.

This was not her only cause of inquietude. She received no news from us; and since she began to live with lady Gower on a footing of intimacy, she had discovered principles and shades of character which did not please her; she repented having put herself under her protection, but yet never formed the least suspicion with respect to Lisborne, whose conduct towards her continued to be respectful and reserved.

Several young englishmen of his and lady Gower's acquaintance were at Hamburgh, and came to see them. Insensibly their house became a rendezvous of pleasure and dissipation; every evening brought a numerous assembly; there came also several ladies, and they passed the half of the night gaming and dancing. The manners of this society became every day more void of restraint. Lisborne alone was serious, but he was more tender, and began again to speak to Mina of his passion.

My daughter expressed her astonishment to lady Gower at the new mode of life her ladyship had adopted; but she was told that this was the way they lived in England, and that it was better to live happy when people could.

Lisborne excused his cousin.—She has been so long

plunged in melancholy,' said he, 'that I am rejoiced to see her resume her gaiety a little; but, like all the women of her nation, she carries every thing to excess; both sadness and joy.'

Mina, in the simplicity of her heart, believed him and said no more. ——She acknowledged to us, with her natural frankness, that the continual scene of mirth before her eyes had not been without some effect upon her.

'I was,' said she, 'in a sort of stupefaction; I tottered upon the brink of the abyss. Lisborne never quitted me; and without my perceiving it, by almost insensible gradations, became every day more free and familiar with me.'

In the midst of this crowd of visitors, Mina distinguished a young englishman, who appeared to take no part in the general gaiety. She surprised him often with his eyes fixed upon her at times with a look of curiosity, at others with a look of vexation or pity. One day he found her in a summer house in the garden, where she went to read a new english novel. The situation of the heroine was affecting, and Mina's tears testified the interest she took in it.

The young englishman inquired the cause, and she gave him the book, which was—*the seduction*,' pointing to those lines which made her tears to flow.

'*Alas! whither shall I fly!—he has deceived, ruined, and left me!*'

The young englishman read them, and looked at Mina a long time with an astonished, compassionate air. He returned her the book, saying—'what, is it upon you that those words produce such an effect?—upon you?'

'Whence proceeds your surprise?' said Mina to him; 'is there a greater misfortune than that of a young, innocent girl, who falls into the hands of a seducer, of a wretch?'

'Poor girl!' murmured the englishman, drawing aside a few steps; but soon approaching her—'is it still time?'

said he to her earnestly; 'can you yet be saved? are you innocent, and not seduced? are these tears the overflowings of repentance, or of pitying virtue?'

Mina rose up with affright.—'In the name of God, sir, explain yourself! what have you to tell me?'

'Nothing,' replied the englishman, composing himself; then laying his finger on the title of the book—'poor girl!' he said, pathetically, 'behold your fate, or that which is reserved for you!'

Mina turned pale, and said with firmness—'never, sir, never—rather would I die! but I do not comprehend you; I ought not even to be suspected, and I will mention it to Lisborne.'

'Poor thing! go tell Lisborne that I traduce him, and he will deceive you still!'

'What proofs have you of the truth?'

'To-morrow at the same hour, if you will come to this summer-house; I will bring you proofs; you may then do what you think proper—I shall only have done my duty.'

Mina returned to the house, and feigned an indisposition, in order not to appear. The next day she walked to the summer-house. The englishman was there, and had brought her a letter written by Lisborne to one of his friends who resided in Hamburgh, instructing him to take a country-house for him.

'He had become acquainted,' wrote he, 'with a girl that turned his head, and whom he desired to possess at any expense. It will be difficult,' continued he—'for it is impossible to have more virtue or more wit; but she relies, perhaps, too much both on the one and on the other. I have already succeeded in putting her upon bad terms with the lady at whose house she lives, and in giving her a desire to travel; which is a great point gained: —with so lively an imagination, and such an exalted head, one does not wish by halves; and I hope to conduct her, before long, to the house I desire you to secure for me.

I have conferred the title of lady Gower, and my relation on one of my old *friends*, and it is with her the dear creature is to travel. I will soon join them, and I hope every thing from the seduction of pleasure, company, vanity, example, and my attentions. If Mira be not an angel, she must yield.'

She knew Lisborne's hand, and could no longer doubt of his perfidy. She saw with horror that, under an assumption of virtue, he had labored from the first to accomplish a plan of seduction, of which she was to be the victim.—'What a monster!' cried she. 'I will go and throw this letter at his feet; unbraid him, load him with contempt, and quit the house!'

'Poor girl!' observed the englishman, 'would you be at liberty to do so? think of the income Lisborne derives from his riches and credit; he has gone to considerable expense already to conduct you here, and do you think he will permit you to escape him so easily? you have spies over you who watch you closely, and broken money enough to escape the eye of justice one way or another.'

Some company coming that way at the time, hindered the englishman from saying any more; but Mira knew enough not to be able to bear the sight of Lisborne.

In her anguish she wanted to fly that moment. She ran to the garden-door, but found it locked; and the gardener delayed, and, in fact, under different pretexts, refused opening it. She then took a desperate resolution. Determined not to remain another day under the same roof with the two monsters who had conspired her ruin; she waited for night with the utmost impatience.

When she thought the servants all retired, she slipped into a chambery where a kitchen-maid lay fast asleep. She lost not a moment to put on her clothes, without making the least noise, and left her own in their stead. At midnight she went down trembling into the garden, and crossed the *Aa*, *Ia* on a narrow plank which she found over

unfolded. Then finding herself in the open country, she took her direction by the stars, and walked as fast as she could along the first road to the south.

In her trouble, the poor child had forgot her purse in the pockets of the clothes she had left behind, and found only a little copper in those of the kitchen-maid. She ran, instead of walking, as long as her strength permitted. Every man she met made her tremble, thinking it was an emissary of Lisborne. She dared not even venture into any inn, and only took a few hours sleep in the fields upon some hay; nor had she taken any other sustenance but the wild fruits of the hedges.

As she travelled night and day, she arrived at our house at the end of five days, in the state we beheld her; and it was indeed time. She was spent with fatigue, and could not have supported such a painful journey any longer. But all was now forgotten; we had found each other again; our child was innocent, and in safety in the bosom of her family; we thought not of past ills, but only of blessing heaven for our present happiness.

Uncle Ludwig returned without having discovered Lisborne, or any trace of him. He entered in the greatest consternation.

"Mina is here! Mina is innocent and virtuous!" cried we all at the moment he came in.

He ran to her, and pressed her joyfully in his arms, calling her his dear child. He made her recount her history, which he listened to with profound attention.

When she had done, he went with her into an adjoining room where they had a long conversation. On coming in, Mina's eyes were red and she looked downcast; but Ludwig, on the contrary, was serene and joyful. She told us he had given her a long lecture, and made her feel that she had exposed herself to every thing that had happened by too much endeavoring to divide and please;

and thereby deviating from the line of conduct that became her. She acknowledged that the lesson had been sufficiently strong to correct her presumption.

'I imagined,' said she, 'that I knew the world and mankind when I was but an inexperienced child. The novel of Clarissa which I took for my ægis, has not prevented my meeting with a Lovelace, or my being on the point of becoming his victim.'

CHAP. XX.

The surprise.

I HAD some reason to believe that Salzman loved Mina and we were all certain he was beloved by her. Elizabeth begged us to let their hearts come to an understanding without interfering in any manner, which I must confess I was very much tempted to do.

Salzman loved Mina in reality, and desired to obtain her hand. He for a long time had suspected he was not indifferent to her; the adventure at the fair had almost made him certain of it; but then the manner in which she hurried away from him recalled his doubts. Her absence confirmed them, and they were strengthened by the confused remembrance of having offended her, and of thinking that by his conduct he had perhaps extinguished even her friendship.

What I told him of Mina's sentiments for him, enou-

ragedy, while it affected him, and gave new fervor to his love; but the error under which he lay, of her having married an englishman, and the obscurity in which all this history was involved, rendered him mistrustful and sad. At last, however, he took the resolution of going to Elizabeth, and declaring to her his love and his doubts. She gave him her sister's letters to read, and related to him all the circumstances of the affair.

The young man wanted instantly to speak to Mina, and offer her his hand; but Elizabeth observed to him that such a precipitate step might at that moment appear to be dictated by compassion more than by love, and persuaded him to continue his visits and wait till Mina should have restored him her confidence.

Salzman came, therefore, to see us usually every second day, but he appeared to me to be more at ease than I could have desired, and Mina more distant than I had expected; there was between them a sort of measured reserve.

During some time I adhered to the character of an observer, then I ventured some indirect allusions to the situation of their hearts, at which Salzman was embarrassed and silent, and Mina blushed and said not a word, so that I began to lose all hopes.

Thus passed the autumn, and a part of the winter. At length came the end of the year, and saint Sylvester's day. Uncle Ludwig and all my children, even Wahlen and his, had been at my house some days. There was none wanting but poor Charles.

I was the last risen that day, and when I went down found all my children and grandchildren assembled. Love, and cordiality animated the joyous circle, yet I could perceive that the smile of delight which played on the lips of my Augusta, was allayed by a sentiment of sadness. I contemplated this reunion of objects so dear to our hearts, and I felt mine dilate with felicity.

'Why wait until evening?' cried I. 'Why not this moment express the joy and love that possess us? mother, behold thy children, and let us thank God!'

I embraced my wife. All our children crowded round us to have their turn. Elizabeth laid her youngest child on her mother's lap, and the two eldest clung to her robe. It was one of the most rapturous sights I have ever witnessed in the course of my life; a true moment of celestial joy!—my wife pressed her face, which was bathed in tears, upon that of her grandson; at the same time laying her hand upon its forehead to bless it. It was called Charles, it resembled its uncle; it was the grandmother's favorite.

Elizabeth, whose affectionate heart glowed for all the objects of its attachment, at the same instant clasped her mother and children together in her arms; then turning her beautiful eyes upon Mina, seemed to say to her—'behold the happiness that awaits thee!'

'Bountiful creator!' cried I, 'grant us another saint Sylvester's day, when we shall be happier than this!'

My wife who was intirely occupied with the image of her son Charles, thought I was speaking of his return.

'God bless our dear Charles,' prayed she, joining her hands together, 'and bring him to us once more!'

'God bless him!' repeated we all.

This idea cast a tint of sadness upon our joy, and rendered it more solemn. We preserved the same sweet and tranquil disposition all day, but when evening came on we were all more or less embarrassed; each had a little present ready for my wife. But our sensibility was in some measure paralized; we no longer knew what to say, and we felt a sort of constraint on bringing our offering. We could not help smiling at the formal air we respectively observed in each other.

'It is singular,' said my wife, pointing to the table covered with all the fine things we had given her, 'to see our indifference for all that; when formerly a ribbon, a trifle, used to give us so much pleasure.'

'You see,' said uncle Ludwig, who had also brought his present, 'you see you are still poorer than formerly. What have all those fine things cost you?—the trouble of sending a messenger to town to buy them. It is certain that nothing more remains to offer each other but your mutual love.'

He was right. The trifles, to make which my two daughters had worked some nights for the purpose of presenting them as new-year's gifts to their mother, their brothers, their sister, and me, excited a joy that affected us to tears; but to-day we received a heap of rich presents with indifference——they had cost only money.

We separated early. Elizabeth and Mina sat together till nine o'clock; and I remained to go out of the house, according to my custom, to hear the last stroke of the clock of the closing year and to hail the commencement of the new. My wife was sitting beside me, and we were speaking of Mina. The door opened, and Elizabeth, cast a look into the room.

'They are not gone to bed yet,' whispered she, looking behind her, and presently entered with Salzman whom she held by the hand. Mina followed them slowly, and with downcast eyes.

A secret presentiment vibrated through my heart. This moment brought to my recollection that when, on the same anniversary, Elizabeth, holding the same young man by the hand, came to throw herself at my feet, and said to me; 'bless your children! bless the son I give you!'

The good, gentle, soul advanced; smiled, and in vain made signs to the two others to speak.

'Dear father,' said she at last, breaking silence, 'they come to ask thy benediction! they have to-day mutually acknowledged that they love each other.'

'God bless you, my children!' cried I with joyful emotion. 'Salzman, it is long since my heart adopted thee for a son!'

He took Mina's hand, and pressed it to his lips. She was motionless. The tears that ran down her pale cheeks alone demonstrated her existence.

'Mina,' cried Elizabeth, 'dear Mina, 'art thou not happy?'

She looked down, making a sign of diffidence with her head.

'Speak, Mina, I beseech thee; he has loved thee a long time.'

'Are you not deceiving me?' cried Mina in a low voice; 'is it possible that he loves me?'

'Yes, Mina; I protest that it is only at my intreaty that he has not spoken to thee sooner. Salzman, speak yourself.'

The poor fellow seemed by his disconcerted look to be confounded at Mina's doubts. He probably felt that she might in fact perceive some difference between the manner of his receiving Elizabeth's promise, and that with which he was to receive hers. But can any love be compared to the first? the sentiment Salzman felt for Mina was of another nature—less anxious, less ardent; it was perhaps more tender, and likely to be durable: it had more of friendship, of gratitude, of the placid confidence of reciprocity of affection; it was already conjugal love, exalted by hope.

He turned to Mina, and, with the genuine accent of truth, said to her—'I will not stir hence until you have pronounced my fate—am I the happiest or most miserable of men?'

She did not reply still.

'Mina, dear Mina,' resumed he in a more animated tone, 'I love you long——'

'And you know——' cried she, blushing.

'Ah, all, your innocence, your virtue, your—ah, confirm the happiness your father and sister have encouraged me to hope!'

He took her hand, pressed it to his lips and to his heart; and Mina, dissolving in tears, fell into his arms.

'You know all,' murmured she; 'what more have I to tell you?'

Elizabeth had exacted of Salzman not to speak to Mina before saint Sylvester's day, and he had promised it. This silence had caused a sort of constraint in his conduct which occasioned Mina's coolness. The poor thing, seeing him continually conversing with Elizabeth, thought that he loved her still.

That evening he had been with us; and when the two sisters went out, he followed them.

'Come, Mina,' said Elizabeth, 'I have my present to give thee;' and she took them both with her into her room.

The plan did not succeed at first according to her expectation. When she said to Mina, presenting Salzman—'here, sister, here is my gift; and I ask a brother of thee in return:' they were both embarrassed, and the wished-for explanation did not take place; the conversation even turned to indifferent subjects, with distressing confusion on both sides. Elizabeth grew impatient; she thought all settled on taking a hand of each, and saying to them—'since you love each other, my dear children——'

Mina gave her a little blow, and ran off. Salzman remained, but kept silence. She then caught hold of him, as her last resource, saying—'whoever loves me, will follow me;' and in this manner led them to us, where the explanation took place as we have seen.

'Ah, Mina!' said Elizabeth to her sister, whom Salzman still embraced, 'what trouble thou hast given me!

is all this coyness necessary to say I love, when one feels it so sincerely ?'

'It is necessary to be sure of the answer,' replied Mina, blushing; 'it is as much as I dare to say, even now.'

'Unjust Mina?' exclaimed Salzman with a tone that expressed every thing; and Mina, inclining upon his arm, atoned for all by saying, tenderly—'yes, I love you, and I am happy.'

Elizabeth was beside herself with joy. 'She is happy!' cried she; 'my dear Mina is happy, and nothing now is wanting to my happiness!'

We came to more particular explanations afterwards, and the hearts of the young couple expanded for each other without reserve. The hours glided rapidly in transports, in expressions of tenderness, in vows a thousand times repeated, and midnight struck.

'My dear children,' said I, taking them in my arms, 'may each year of your lives pass over like the end of this! how different was the sound of the same clock four years ago at this hour, when I thought, Mina, that it announced the moment of thy death!'

At the recollection of this, Salzman threw himself at Mina's feet, and at that moment loved her as much as he had ever loved Elizabeth; and Mina was amply repaid for all she had suffered.

Wahlen who came to know what delayed his wife so long, entered. She flew into his arms, showing him her sister and Salzman. I left the two fortunate couple to expatiate on their happiness, and went up into my study.

CHAP. XXI.

Second wedding.

I THREW my window open. Myriads of stars sparkled in the immense vault of a clear winter sky, and seemed to my intellectual eye as the image of my happy old age. In about a quarter of an hour my wife came to join me, and placed herself softly beside me. I laid my arm over her shoulder. 'This beautiful sky,' said I to her, 'under which we are so happy, covers a milder climate also, a warmer country than ours, where there is not even any winter, that in which our Charles is.'

'He can see these stars too,' cried Augusta, 'and will perhaps look at them, and think on us.'

The good mother looked at them, while she spoke, as if she thought they could reflect the image of her son.

We next spoke of Mina's approaching nuptials, which crowned us with joy; and Augusta begged me not to defer it too long.

'Every thing that happens to my daughters,' said she in a serious tone, 'is so extraordinary, and so little resembles the manner in which I was married, that I wish the young people were so at once, that there might not be a love adventure and a novel always going on in my family. Say what you please, Elizabeth and Mina have risked being extremely unhappy, and their happiness has been purchased at the expense of a great deal of tears. If all be right at present, let us thank God for it and not our prudence.'

'I allow,' replied I, 'my dear, that it is not to us they are indebted the one for marrying a rich baron, and the other a rich farmer—it is their hearts that have made the

choice, and providence has conducted it to a happy issue. But Elizabeth having preserved her fortitude in poverty, and her modesty in affluence; and Mina her strength of mind under the sufferings of an unhappy love, and her virtue in the whirlpool of dissipation, is owing to the good principles and example they have received from us since their infancy. Now that the days of sorrow are past, I return thanks to God for having put trials in their way which have rendered them better. Remember what Seneca says—'*he who has not known misfortune, knows the world only on one side; he has seen only the half of life's drama.*'

'That is true,' said Augusta; 'but what should we be the worse if we had passed through life without having seen the sorrowful side?'

'A great deal, dear wife, a great deal. We should be destitute of the intimate persuasion that a good conscience is the greatest of happiness; we should not know the strength of our hearts, nor the enjoyments of mutual love, which gave such a divine zest to mortal happiness. Yes, I repeat it; the sorrows we have undergone have rendered us better, and we should be grateful to God for having sent them.'

'And I am so,' cried she with emotion; 'but God cannot be offended at my desiring my Charles's return, and the happiness of of our children.'

'No certainly, dear Augusta; to love our children, and rejoice at their goodness and felicity, is an attribute which we share with that good father.'

'Now,' continued she, 'that I know a little more of the world, I tremble at the dangers to be met with in it. We passed our life in retirement, and yet the tempests broke upon us. But Elizabeth is going to live in town, and what will become of her children? suppose we were to take her little Lolotte; now that the experience of our daughters has instructed us in the dangers of love, we shall be able to preserve our grand-daughter from it.

I have spoken already to Wahlen, and his wife, and they are willing to leave us their child to enliven our solitude.'

I consented likewise, smiling at this arrangement, although I well foresaw that at our age we could not watch the heart of a young girl better than we had done when we were so much younger; but there was still time enough before the heart of Lolotte would begin to speak. In compliance with my wife's desire, the wedding-day was fixed within the fortnight. Uncle Ludwig and Elizabeth insisted upon supplying her paraphernalia, and made it so extravagant that all the tables and chairs in our largest room were covered with linen and other effects. My wife saw it with indifference enough, and Mina with still more. 'Acknowledge,' said I to them, 'that Elizabeth's wardrobe, which cost Mina only her pearls, and thee, dear Augusta, such pleasing tears, was more precious than this. Elizabeth received it with the emotion of the liveliest joy, and Mina scarcely looks at her's. Thou seest then clearly now that the cares, troubles, and inquietudes of life contribute also to increase its happiness.'

'Ah!' observed my wife, smiling, 'are people ever without that kind of happiness? at present my daughters are, it is true, happy and rich—we want for nothing; but my Charles is in India, and who knows even if he be living at the moment I speak? dost thou not think,' said she to me, 'in spite of thy system of the advantage of suffering, that if he were with us we should be happier?'

I had not the resolution to contradict her. I felt myself too distressingly how much our son was necessary to our happiness. But friend Ludwig, while he felt it likewise, persisted in saying that a calm, uniform and continued happiness, never troubled by any uneasiness, would end in disgust, and was not proper for man upon earth.

We disputed some time upon that head, without being able to convince one party or the other.

'Your argument proves, it would seem,' said Elizabeth, 'that man with his desires, his chimeras, and natural inquietudes, belongs to a better world than this.—Except love, in which I comprehend maternal and filial, does there exist a single happiness but what becomes indifferent by desires of some other description that succeed it? if man were condemned to immortality upon this earth; the tomb would soon become the most ardent of his wishes.'

Salzman and Mina were not present at this conversation; they would, I am pretty sure, have asserted that man is destined to enjoy the most perfect happiness in this world and for their own part would desire no better.

As soon as the wedding was over, and our bridal company gone, my wife collected all the books that contained a word about love, and hid them carefully.

'I hope,' cried she, 'that we shall hear no more of them. Annette is the most reasonable of my girls, and I do not fear for her; but I will desire Elizabeth, however, when we go there, not to invite any of those young barons that turn poor girls heads.'

'Let us wait tranquilly,' said I, 'and see what will happen to our dear Annette. Good sense will, I hope, render her happy, as love does her sisters; and that kind of happiness, though probably not so exquisite, is at least purchased at the expense of less vexation.

CHAP. XXII.

News.

After a few weeks of happiness and repose, I began to consider the late events as an agreeable dream.—Our family was reduced to my wife, myself and Annette; and nothing now disturbed our tranquillity. Annette, at eighteen, was still *the sage Annette*; and my wife was confident that, as to the chapter of love, she would conduct herself quite differently from her sisters. It appeared in effect that there was not the least resemblance between them; she had neither the sensibility of Elizabeth, nor Mina's vivacity, nor did she trouble herself about any thing but the household affairs. Sometimes, however, I had observed that when her mother was not in the way she laid by the psalm-book she used to make her sing out of, to take up a collection of pretty romantic ballads Wahlen had given her, and which she sung with much expression; but I kept the secret in order not to give uneasiness to my wife, who might perhaps, deprive her of all her music.

We had news often from Elizabeth, who was perfectly happy. Mina, who lived near us, was not less so and came frequently to tell it us. She had recovered the gaiety of her teens, and diverted us as she used to do when a girl. She bantered Annette upon her sageness, and her mother upon her confidence. She predicted that there would be another intire new *romance* in the family.

My wife chid her, and grew displeased. I laughed. Annette put on her little prudent reserved look; but, in

in spite of Augusta's displeasure, if Mina were three days without coming she would grow impatient and say that mrs. Salzman forgot us; and so a messenger was instantly obliged to be dispatched.

In a short time, however, it became necessary to bear the absence patiently. Friend Ludwig and Wahlen procured her husband a considerable farm, which gave him the title of intendant, and removed him farther from us. We visited them less frequently; but she wrote to us regularly, and her letters delighted us, as well by the charm of the style, as from the tenderness and vivacity that animated them. Sometimes, however, my wife would weep after reading them, and say——'my Charles cannot write to me thus.'

Let our happiness then be imagined when we received two letters from him, which arrived almost at the same time.

'From Charles,' cried I, recollecting the hand of the superscription.

I had not time to cast my eyes over it, when my wife snatched it out of my hands. She looked at it, but her agitation and tears hindered her from reading it. I took it again and read it slowly, reflecting as I proceeded.

At the recital of the dangers he had gone through, his mother clasped her trembling hands, and prayed to God for her darling son. She carried the letter with her every where, and read it several times a day, sometimes thanking God for the good fortune of her child, while at others her imagination called up the most extraordinary dangers. But whether she rejoiced or was afflicted, she always found my heart ready to sympathize in her sentiments; the little coolness that subsisted between us at the time of Mina's misfortune, had served only to redouble our attachment. I loved my Augusta with more tenderness than ever, and managed her susceptible heart with all the delicacy mine could inspire.

The worthy Ludwig wrote to us also, and sent us a letter from captain Elsworth, which particularized what Charles had only hinted at in a few words.

From the first moment he was on board the ship, he was indefatigable in learning the naval art, and showed such strength and resolution in attempting and executing the boldest and most difficult things, as no sailor could surpass; for doing which his activity and his health, which had been always excellent, fitted him peculiarly. When calm weather or fair winds left him time his taste for reading, and zeal to improve himself, prompted him to find other employment; so that he was never idle.

The passage to the cape of Good Hope took up six months, and supplied him with a fund of knowledge and experience that is not often acquired in several voyages; But he had been in danger of being lost more that once. All possible accidents seemed to conspire against the ship in which Charles sailed; they underwent both storms and maladies; and in the Indian ocean were in the most imminent danger of perishing by fire. The whole crew was thrown into confusion; all subordination had ceased, and some of the most terrified had launched the long-boat and thrown themselves into it. Charles, however, did not quit his post but gave the commander an advice that saved the vessel; since when, he had continued to be his favorite: and on their arrival at Bengal, was particularly recommended by him to the governor-general; and when he wrote, was in a fair way of making a brilliant fortune.

'Would to God that he were with us without that fortune!' exclaimed my wife, sighing. 'Who knows the accidents, the tempests, and dangers through which he must seek it! when I think upon the long, perilous voyage of six months he has to make before he can come back! ah! that cruel intendant, what tears and sorrows he has occasioned me! I could wish to know if Charles love his daughter still. Look at what he has put in the margin! and she read——

'In vain am I in India; my heart and my thoughts are still at Eizebach. I think only of those I love so tenderly?'

'I would bet that he was thinking of Juliet too, when he wrote that.'

'I should be sorry for it,' said I with vexation. 'That young woman does not please me at all. Has she come once to see us since? has she told us how she happened to take a liking to my son?'

In reality we had scarcely seen her since she came to take leave of us so tenderly. I forgot that the same day, after the noble avowal she made in our presence, I had left her without saying a word. When I entered the room again, she was not there; the poor creature thought, and should think, that I disapproved the attachment; and then the hand her parents had in the departure of my son, of which she knew us to be informed, embarrassed her still more. She had not dared to return; but I had reason to suspect that uncle Ludwig, who never let any opportunity escape of speaking well of her, saw her sometimes and that he was even charged to do so by Charles; and perhaps, at bottom, my spite against her proceeded from her not having made choice of me for a confident.

CHAP. XXIII.

Third wedding.

We passed two years in perfect tranquillity, without our internal happiness being diminished or disturbed by any disagreeable event; the birth of a child to one or other of our married daughters rather served to in-

ornate it. Our third daughter, still *the sage Annette*, grown tall and handsome, deserved that name more than ever. The perfect calm of her heart exempted us from all apprehension of novels with respect to her. She was twenty, and her calmness continued still the same; when an ecclesiastic of our neighborhood, who was about thirty-five, and a widower, a man very much esteemed, and in easy circumstances, without any child but a boy of seven years old, came to ask Annette in marriage; after having met her two or three times in company.

My wife was enchanted to have once in her life a proposal of marriage for one of her daughters, made in regular and due form; and first of all to the parents. Her pleasure augmented from the manner in which Annette received it; without any appearance either of pleasure or pain, showing only that sort of surprise which proved that she did not expect it, and demanding some days to reflect.

The gentleman made some visits, and coldly renewed his proposal to herself in our presence. He was accepted in the same manner, contracted according to form, and my wife for once in her life could enjoy the pleasure she had been deprived of at the marriages of her two eldest daughters, that of taking upon her the preparations for the wedding.

The sage and apathetic Annette assisted her as unconcernedly as if it did not regard herself. Never did I see a bride more tranquil or less occupied about her intended, nor a bridegroom more patient and considerate. It was not like our sons-in-law—transports, tears, pressures of the hand, genuflections, &c. they scarcely spoke to each other more than a good day, or an inquiry after one another's health.

Mr. Balker was never in a reverie. Annette minded every thing as usual, and did every thing in the house with such order and reflection, that in the end I became seriously uneasy at it.—'It is not possible that they love each other,' thought I; 'an indifferent marriage is anticipated death.'

I resolved to speak to the bride, and took a favorable occasion.

'Tranquillize yourself, dear father,' said she to me with her mild, peaceful look; 'I am happy, so is my mother—be then happy too.'

Since she was content, I could not but be so likewise; but I felt that, were I in their place, I should not have been so.

At last the wedding-day arrived, and all my family assembled around me. We were all affected on going to church to be present at the ceremony except the bride and bridegroom, who received the benediction with a tolerable satisfied air, but without the least emotion. In coming home, Mina did all she could to animate them, but to no purpose; neither one nor the other answered her pleasantries but by a placid smile.

Annette, all in white, with the crown of flowers upon her head, looked really very well; and every body admired her except her husband, who said not a word and hardly looked at her. Mrs. Salzman, grown impatient, led her to him, saying 'now do you not think she is handsome?'

He answered so coldly, that at last she grew displeased and Elizabeth sad; even at table every one was serious—I never saw a more ceremonious entertainment. My wife alone was perfectly well pleased, because every thing was according to rule; and not knowing what else to say the supper, and her good taste in regulating every thing, were the more admired.

As the absence of gaiety made time seem long, we retired early. Elizabeth and Mina conducted their sister to her chamber with becoming formality. They remained there a long time; and when they came out, I remarked a something of sentimental joy in Elizabeth's eyes, and upon Mina's lips an arch smile that tranquillized me a little.

The next day after breakfast, my new son-in-law led his wife quietly home to his parsonage. When they

were gone, my good Augusta began to make an encomium upon Annette, her modest reserve, and the dignity with which she had conducted herself, &c.

She seized this occasion to give a sermon to her two daughters, and especially to Mina, upon love, novels, declarations, &c. returning continually to the eulogium of Annette and her prudence.

Mina drew from her pocket a large packet of letters that somebody had, she said, confided to her, and demanded permission to read us some pages to reconcile her mother to the passion of love.

'Let us hear,' said Augusta, shaking her head; 'that will be somewhat difficult.'

These epistles, of which she left out the names, *burned the paper*, as sometimes people express it: they teemed with expressions of the liveliest and most enthusiastic passion. My wife declared they were highly improper; and began again to speak of her Annette, who would not, surely, have been capable of writing or receiving similar things.

Elizabeth made a sign to her sister, laughing, who handed her one of the letters, of which she showed me the signature; during which Mina showed another to her mother, who blushed, and assumed a serious look. For me, I acknowledge I was ready to burst with laughter. Those fervid letters were from Annette's husband, addressed to——the sage Annette, and implied answers in the same style.

We saw that they had loved each other a long time; they loved each other—they said so—they corresponded. But Annette, still sage notwithstanding, did not wish to marry before twenty, and had conducted herself as a bride with all that reserve, to give her mother pleasure. The evening of her wedding she confided all to her sisters, to calm their fears respecting the coldness she and her husband showed for each other, and charged them to tell it us, asking pardon of her mother for the little dissimulation she had practised on account of the motive.

'You see, mother,' said Mina, when she had done reading, 'that we are not to judge by appearances. Love may assume all sorts of forms, even that of indifference; but it is still love. I hid my novels formerly in a bible-case, and Annette hid her heart under an exterior of ice. I am happy—she will be so too; what do you want more? all your children are destined to love, as Elizabeth said on a former occasion, and destiny must be fulfilled. Annette is your daughter like the rest.'

My wife, in spite of her little disappointment, could not help smiling; but she cast a look upon Lolotte, who was playing in a corner with her doll. I perceived that, in defiance of destiny, she proposed to herself to preserve her at least from love, and we have seen how well she succeeded. It was to Annette's step-son, Charles, whom we all adopted, because he was a charming child, that Lolotte sent my sheets of post-paper.

CHAP. XXIV.

The reconciliation.

Some months passed over in the same tranquil manner, rejoicing at the happiness of our daughters, hoping for the return of our excellent Charles, and thanking heaven every day for the good conduct of our children.

One morning somebody rapped at the door, and I saw intendant Schink enter. I caught a shuddering at seeing

him. My wife, who was standing up, did not make any reply to his very civil salute, except by a cold bow of the head, and sat down with an air of dissatisfaction to her work.

I begged him to be seated, and he proposed an arrangement to me about making one of my fields more compact, which I had long desired to do. I could not bring myself to thank him, but answered rather drily that I would consider about it, although the advantage was as clear as day in my favor. In fact, I intended to refuse it, that I might owe no obligation to a man who had treated me as an enemy, and was the cause of my son's exile.

'You have not any occasion to improve your land at present,' said he with timidity, 'it is true; but your successors in the parsonage will be thankful to you for it.'

'Be it so then,' cried I coldly; 'I accept it for my successors, and it is they whom I charge with the gratitude.'

The intendant looked down; then at my wife, who did not mind him; then again at me, as if he were endeavoring to discover which of the two had the more affable look; and certainly neither one nor the other had any such thing.

There was a moment of silence. He broke it to caress Lolotte, whom he thought as pretty as an angel, and the very portrait of the charming baroness von Wahlen.

He inquired next, with an air of the most friendly concern, how my lady's family and all the little barons did. My wife replied only by monosyllables; it seemed as if she had lost her maternal vanity, but it was much worse when he said, unluckily—'you are a happy mother, mrs. Bemrode, and in that respect you have nothing to desire.'

Undoubtedly he forgot our Charles at that moment, or he had very little discretion, to make such an apostrophe to my wife; but she thought of it for him, and answered without looking at him——

'Does it become him, who has robbed me of my son, to talk to me of my happiness? my tears do not yet cease to flow for that beloved child whom you tore from my arms!'

'I!' replied he, exceedingly moved; 'you do not believe——you do not think that I——'

'That you are the cause of it!' interrupted she. 'We are sure of it; we know very well that you have denounced him as a vagabond who was the most excellent, the best of sons! we might have been able to deliver him for all that; but you had the art to contrive to send him to the end of the world. We were poor then, without support or resources. What harm had been done you, that an excellent, well-educated, boy who was the glory and consolation of his parents, should be sacrificed to your vengeance? but divine justice hears my sighs, and will avenge my innocent son. I warn you of it!'

When I heard with what harshness my wife treated him, I could no longer remain silent. To talk of divine vengeance to one who has offended us, is as if we were calling it down upon him; and has poor, frail human nature a right to do so?

'Dear Augusta,' cried I mildly, 'there is another judge above besides a maternal heart. Love and everlasting mercy preside there, and hold out pardon to the repenting sinner.'

She held her tongue, and the intendant turned to me.

'Even supposing,' said he, with an humble look, 'that I was guilty of that wrong, every thing has turned out for the best. I have heard that mr. Charles was on the point of making his fortune.

'And of what consequence is that,' cried my wife impatiently, 'when he must undergo a thousand dangers to make it? why is he not here with us? were we in misery, I should be happier with my Charles than

I am to-day; he would participate in our and his sisters' welfare, while without him I can enjoy nothing.'

'And I, my love, I joy in the courage and virtues he displays amid the dangers thou lamentest, and which constitute his glory and ours. Without this gentleman I should love my son, but I should not know his worth —I should not be so proud of him as I am now. However, sir,' observed I to him, 'your action is not the less unjust or cruel, as you hurried him away loaded with calumny; but may heaven forgive you!'

'And you,' said he, with an air of repentance, 'will you not forgive me? the times are extremely altered. I would not do so at present. Say, do you not forgive me?'

His tone was so contrite, so sincere, that I had already pardoned him. My wife did not say a word, but cast down her eyes. I was sorry for it. If she had seen his humiliated look as I did, she would have been moved.

'I forgive you,' said I, presenting him my hand. He took it, and pressed it.

'And you, madam,' said he, turning to her.

'And I also,' cried she, 'as a good christian; but do not require any more. It is not possible for me to forget that my best child is every day exposed to lose his life; no, I cannot forget it until he is restored to me.'

The intendant rose up sighing, and went to take his hat and cane, which he had laid down on coming in.

'I wanted,' cried he, hesitating, 'I wanted to make you a request about a thing that interests me a great deal——but at present it is better for me to be silent, and withdraw.'

Then my wife, for the first time, lifted her eyes upon him; and his dejected, repenting, air affected her.

'A request!' said she with a tone of good-nature. 'If we could be useful to you, we would with a great deal of pleasure.'

'Ah!' cried he, drawing a profound sigh, 'you could do me a very great service. It is not for myself—I deserve nothing at your hands; but my daughter, my innocent Juliet—must she suffer for my misdeeds?'

He then related to us minutely the different misfortunes that had reduced his brilliant fortune to nothing. He did not spare himself or his wife for their extravagance, but alledged, as some excuse for having persevered in it, the necessity they were under of keeping up appearances in the eyes of their creditors and the count of Rangard, from whom he held the farm of Eizebach.

'I might still extricate myself,' said he, 'by curtailing the useless expenses of my house, if the count would have a little patience; but he has undoubtedly received a hint of something, for he demands five thousand crowns in advance to lease me the farm. I know not where to get them, and I am ruined. I may be able to endure misery—I have deserved it; but my daughter, my poor, dear daughter——you are a father, mr. Pastor, and you must feel for me!'

His voice trembled, and his eyes were full of tears.

My wife dried hers, which flowed plentifully down her cheeks.

'What can we do for you, mr. Schlink?' cried we both at the same time.

'The young count,' replied he, 'is an intimate friend of your son-in-law, baron von Wahlen. He has a great deal of influence over his father, and my lord Wahlen might request him——'

'I will go immediately and write to my daughter,' cried I joyfully; 'I will desire it as if of my own accord;' and I was going to my desk.

'Really,' said he with a little embarrassment, 'you will request them to get my farm left in my possession? what I have heard, then is not true?'

'What is that, pray?'

'That mr. Salzman is going to take the farm, or rather the count to give it to him.'

My wife and I looked at each other, without knowing what to say. We recollected then that Mina had written to us the day before, that an unexpected circumstance would soon bring us nearer one another. We had not guessed what she could have meant by that, but we were now struck with it as with a ray of light.

After a moment's pause, I said frankly—'perhaps this report may not be without foundation. I think at present, sir, that it is very possible.'

I then mentioned to him what my daughter had written, and he listened to me with visible anguish.

'I withdraw my request,' said he to me when I had done. 'It is impossible for you to prefer my interest to your children's and your own; since it will bring you nearer together, I have no more hope.'

He grasped my hand.

'Farewell, mr. Pastor!' cried he; 'I am ruined, lost, and have deserved it.'

He then raised his eyes toward heaven, and added, mournfully—'I struck your son, and your daughter strikes me! you were in the right, madam; there exists a divine justice!'

'God preserve me from calling it down upon you sir!' said she to him, taking him by the hand in a friendly manner. 'Forgive the harsh words occasioned by my grief; I retract them with all my soul. You are unfortunate; look upon us no more but as friends. Let us see what will be possible for us to do. Can you be saved from what you fear? could you settle your affairs if you remained here?'

'I believe I could; the lease is very advantageous, and

my dissipation is at an end. My daughter is very capable of conducting the household affairs, and inspects every thing. I shall no longer be rich, but I can at least live.'

'Augusta, dear Augusta,' said I, looking at her.

She threw herself on my neck, and pressed me to her bosom.

'Is it not so, love?' whispered I.

'Oh, certainly, certainly!' replied she.

We understood each other perfectly; our hearts were in unison.

'Doubtless we should be happier if Mina lived nearer us; but could we enjoy—'

'We should not have one moment's satisfaction,' interrupted she quickly, 'in the house from which we should have banished an unfortunate family.'

'And can we not go to see our daughter oftener where she lives at present?' said I.

'And cannot she come oftener to us?' rejoined my wife.

The intendant's countenance brightened during this abrupt dialogue, which gave him some hopes.

'No, sir, cried my wife to him at last, 'our daughter will not drive you from your house; be sure you are misinformed. She thinks, and her husband too, that you are quitting Eizebach voluntarily. I will write to her this very day.'

He let fall his hat and cane, seized the hands of my wife, and cried—'angels of heaven! and have I been capable of misconceiving you, and offending you so cruelly? and it is thus that you revenge youselves! but if it were too late—if one day you should repent the sacrifice?—think of it well.'

'Repent it!' replied I; 'repent this moment so grateful to our hearts! no, never. Is not a friend in my neighborhood another happiness? will you not be our friend in future?'

He pressed my hand, exclaiming—'for ever, my dear, worthy Pastor!'

But he seemed to fear that it was too late, and that the bargain between Salzman and the count was already concluded.

At that moment Mina, who intended to surprise us, entered the room with her husband. They saluted Mr. Schink with an awkward air, and I perceived clearly that his fears were well founded. He looked at me sorrowfully, and wanted to go out, but I stopped him, saying—'no, sir; it is in misfortune that friends are tried, and my children will be your friends likewise.'

'It is impossible,' cried he sighing.

'Misfortune has sacred and inalienable rights,' replied I; 'and we also have been unfortunate. Do not go; I will speak to my children, and you will see that they think as I do.'

I then inquired of Salzman whether he had any hopes of obtaining the farm of Eizebach.'

'I have the certainty of it,' said he to me. The count of Rangard has written to me, to let me know that mr. Schink was leaving it, and has offered it to me upon the same terms, which I have accepted without any hesitation.'

I related to my children, then, with the intendant's permission, the unhappy circumstances to which he was reduced, what he dreaded, and what he desired, which I did with all possible coolness, in order to enhance my children's generosity, being persuaded that they would instantly comply. But I was punished for my over confident vanity. Salzman and Mina commiserated mr. Schink, but did not hint a word of declining the lease.

Ah! why must we always be necessitated to call in the aid of the imagination when we want to stimulate the human heart to a good action? why is it that generous actions are so seldom, perhaps never, pure and complete, and the effect of a first spontaneous impulse: why must self interest diffuse its icy breath upon the efforts of sensibility and humanity? why is it too often forgotten that

mankind are brothers, and an unfortunate man more than a brother?

'I could wish," cried I to Mina with a tone of reproach, 'that thy memory were better.'

'I wish it were worse, father,' said she to me in a low voice, looking at the intendant. 'My poor brother!'

'But this man is more than a brother,' insisted I, 'for he is unfortunate and poor, what we have ourselves been before now. I declare to you, my children,' cried I, raising my voice, 'that every time I shall go to see you in the castle, it is not you I shall think on; I shall have always before my eyes this unfortunate man, his wife and his child, whom you will have reduced to misery.'

Mina blushed.

'Father,' cried she 'you are much better than I; but it is consistent with your character. Happy must I be to imitate you, and walk in your steps.'

'My love,' said she, turning to her husband, 'I do not care to live in a castle to which my father would come with regret. I like our pretty house much better, where he comes with so much pleasure.'

And then, turning to the intendant, she said to him, gracefully—'remain in it, sir, we both entreat you; I shall be happy in going there to see my amiable Juliet.'

Salzman approached him also, and assured him that he had believed it was himself who had proposed to give it up, and that, for his own part, he thought of it no longer.

The poor man was so affected, that he could only articulate a few broken words, He lifted his eyes and hands to heaven—he wept—he pressed our hands.

'Ah, how lovely is virtue!' exclaimed he at last with feeling emphasis. 'How long have I been deceived in seeking happiness elsewhere! but I must make haste to communicate this good news to my family. He ran to the door, and returned the same moment.

'You will make my happiness complete,' cried he, 'if you will have the kindness to come with me, and repeat your promise in their presence.'

We consented.

'I remain, and we are saved!' exclaimed the intendant, opening the door.

His wife gave us a very cool reception; Juliet, on the contrary, knew not how to express her joy at seeing us, although she was as yet ignorant of the obligations she owed us.

'Wife,' cried the intendant, 'and you, my daughter, you can never sufficiently testify your gratitude to our excellent neighbors,' and he related what had just passed.

The supercilous dame was apparently more humiliated than affected at it; she wanted to diminish the weight of the obligation by saying how much they had improved the domain, and that in reality it was not worth much, but that they were accustomed to it.

'Truth! truth!' cried the husband; 'we should be reduced to beggary, were we forced to quit it. No, mr. Pastor, I cannot dissemble to you; and it is but just that mr. Salzman should see how essential the sacrifice he made me was to my existence, and that it will not be in vain.

He went to look for his books, and Salzman was obliged to submit to go with him into an adjoining room to examine them. His wife wept, more from spite than any thing else. Juliet was admirable throughout; she knew at once how to show us all her sensibiliy, and to respect the vanity of her mother with delicate scrupulousness.

'Dear mother,' cried she to her, 'be consoled; all our troubles are at an end, and we shall henceforth be the best of friends. You could not venture to hope for it this morning, and I was sure of it. You said they must be angels to be capable of acting so nobly, and you were

right; they are angels, and my presentiment has not deceived me.'

The intendant returned with Salzman, whose eyes sparkled with joy.

'It is clear,' said he, 'that, by remaining here, and managing with judicious economy, mr. Schink may retrieve his affairs.'

Schink took his daughter by the hand, and conducted her to me.

'She loves your son—you know it; and it is to my eternal confusion that I repeat it. Juliet has no longer any fortune, but she is worthy of being one day his companion if God permit him to return, and he love her still.'

Juliet blushed, and concealed her embarrassment by embracing my wife, who returned it with tenderness, and said, in spite of her principles—'do not blush dear child; my Charles merits your attachment; and I am sure of him, he will return the same he set out.'

'Mother,' cried Mina, laughing, 'it seems that in our family the sons have great privileges; it is permitted them to love.'

My wife smiled, and bestowed a thousand carrasses on her future daughter-in-law. Joy and openness of heart reigned among us. The intendant vowed that in the course of his life, even in the midst of his false grandeur, he had never found himself so happy. His wife herself at last put off all formality, and became more friendly.

Juliet proposed dining together. We accepted it; and a frugal repast, the first of the kind to which strangers had ever been invited in that house, served to give an opportunity of uniting our hearts still closer. We had occasion to remark that mr. Schink, and even his wife, were not so bad as we had thought them until then. He was only vain, and she proud.

I said to Juliet, with a sentiment of pleasure—'there is nothing like seeing each other without formality. Until

this moment I dreaded your parents, because I thought them vain of their riches.'

'They, on their side,' said she to me ingenuously, 'thought you envious formerly, and vain since you became happy. I knew you better, but appearances were against you.'

She then related several little incidents to me that forced me to acknowledge they had some reason, and that there was often more than mere appearance in it.

It is a great lesson for humanity to reflect that one may be unjust unintentionally, and even unknowingly. The sunday following I preached upon this text—'*forgive us also our hidden sins.*' And on sounding my heart carefully, I brought to mind many circumstances in which, without acknowledging it to myself, I had sought to humiliate mr. Schink.

CHAP. XXV.

Filial devotion.

The human heart is subject to strange eccentricities. it is seldom capable of hating or loving with moderation; and if the motives of its hatred or friendship were analyzed, they would be found to be almost always selflove wounded or gratified. When I had pardoned the intendant the injuries he had done us, and prevailed on my children to give up all pretensions to the farm he occupied, this conduct appeared to me so magnanimous, so gene-

rous, and I was so highly pleased with myself, that I felt a something like gratitude towards him who had been the occasion of my enjoying the delightful sentiment. The welfare of that family became my ruling desire, I thought, I dreamed of nothing else. I gave Wahlen no rest until he wrote to the count in their favor, who in consequence consented to let Schink keep the farm, but demanded sureties for the time to come, and payment in ready money for what he already owed.

I sounded Ludwig, to try if he would step forward to the assistance of my new friend, but he turned a deaf ear to it; and when I explained myself at last more clearly, and requested it of him in plain terms, he refused me flatly.

'Would you have counselled me,' said he, 'to lend that money to the intendant before he had applied to you, had you known the situation of his affairs?'

I replied frankly that I would not.

'Well then,' rejoined he, 'I do not see why I should have to pay for the pleasure you take in forgiving him.'

Vexed to my inmost soul to find him so obdurate, I returned to my sons-in-law, to try what I could do in that quarter.

To oblige me, they, offered all they could spare; but it was not near sufficient to extricate my unfortunate neighbor. He had in vain applied to his wife's relations; but, now that he was ruined, and forced to alter the style of his house, they were ashamed of him, and put him off on different pretexts. There was another yet to whom he had not thought of making application, and this was an old miser, who had quarrelled with them long before, and could never pardon his niece either her luxury or her impertinence. One day Ludwig, in answer to my importunities said to me——

'Why do they not apply to that man? he is said to be better than he looks, and I would bet that he will do something for them.'

I mentioned it to mr. Schink, and, as he had no other resource, he resolved upon doing it; and, contrary to all expectation, the old man answered that he would come himself to see what was to be done.

We were one day at the castle, when we perceived an old ugly carriage at a distance, drawn by plough-horses, and driven by a countryman.

'See!' cried mrs. Schink, 'if he do not shame his relations!'

The intendant sighed, and I saw that he was reflecting —'if I had done the same, I should not have occasion for him to-day.'

He entered, and his countenance seemed to me, at first sight, to be so good, that I would not have hesitated to place the utmost confidence in him.

'Well, niece,' said he, coming in, 'misfortune is good for something: you will treat me with respect now that I can be of use to you. Let us see—what is the business?'

'My dear uncle!' cried she with confusion, 'different unfortunate accidents have ruined us!'

'Yes, I perceive,' said he, looking at the fine furniture; 'I see those unlucky accidents.'

He approached me, as he would to an old acquaintance, and shook me by the hand.

'I am charmed,' said he, 'to find a man of your character here.'

Juliet being engaged with the house-hold affairs, was not there. She was called, and instantly appeared, dressed in a very simple manner. She ran to embrace her old uncle, and he regarded her a long time with an air of satisfaction.

'I am told a great deal of good of thee, dear little girl,' said he to her: 'I love thee, and will prove it.'

'Ah, you are come to assist my parents!' cried she joyfully; 'how happy will you then render me!'

'That is indeed my intention, love; but in my life I never did any thing for nothing, and you must, on your side, do something for me.'

'Ask me what you will,' said she, in a lively tone.

'I take thee at thy word,' replied he, laughing and presenting her his hand, 'and I will require nothing very disagreeable. Come, let us see your papers, mr. intendant.'

We wanted to withdraw, but he would not allow it.

'Good people and friends,' observed he, 'are never too many.'

The intendant himself begged us to stay.

'I am very glad,' said the uncle to him, 'to see that you do not fear to acknowledge your follies before an honest man; for that shows a resolution to commit no more.'

The papers were exhibited, and Schink spoke of his situation with anxiety, but still with much frankness. His debts were more considerable than we had supposed. The old gentleman was frightened at them.

'What if God had been pleased to take you from this world suddenly? you owe people who are poor and would have been reduced to beggary. And for what end? to make those who came to feast at your sumptuous table, say—'it must be allowed that every thing is very good at mr. Schink's.' And what would your conscience have told you? and God himself, what does he say?'

He pronounced these words so forcibly, that the poor intendant, who was as pale as death, could only stammer out—

'Juliet knows that no poor person would have lost any thing, although I were dead to-day.'

'And how is that?

'The amount was sealed up separately, and in my daughter's hands.'

'What a tale!' cried the old man, frowning. 'It was but a jest, and you would not have been in difficulty long before you would have resorted to that money.'

'I have been so a long time, and yet I have not touched it.'

'Go bring me that money, little one,' said the uncle to Juliet.

She acknowledged, blushing exceedingly, that being afraid it might be made use of, she had paid all, unknown to her father; and she produced the receipts.

'When did that happen?' demanded he, looking at her.

'Eight days ago, when you had lost all hopes. My dear father, forgive me! I knew you would approve of it!'

'Even if you had not known it, dear child, you only would have done your duty.'

He continued to examine the books and papers, and the result was, that it required a very considerable sum to retrieve his affairs. The old relation walked about the room, saying, from time to time——

'It is too much: I cannot do it; it is impossible!'

I thought I might say something in their favor; but he replied——

'Do you know, sir, if I be able? the whole is too much for me, and a part would not relieve them.'

Juliet threw herself round his neck, shedding a torrent of tears.

'Go, go, little girl! thou wilt make me weep too! but console thyself: every thing will be right if thou please, little niece.'

'Oh, I will do any thing—even the most hateful of all things, so it hurt only myself!'

'Well, then, what I am going to require of thee, is not so very hateful. Listen: the son of one of my friends saw thee by chance while thou wert at the boarding-school, and is dying in love with thee ever since. His father and himself, whom I see every day, have continually teazed me to take some steps to obtain thy hand for him. But I had no intercourse with you then: a poor original like me, who wears a threadbare coat, and rides in an old carriage, is not worth seeing. Besides, that young man, although virtuous and well bred, had neither employment nor fortune; and I gave him to understand that, in such a case, one may well be in love, but should not declare it. The poor fellow held his tongue, therefore; but since then he has been lucky enough to fall in with a very lucrative employment. He returned to me with greater confidence; and he was in the right, my little friend, for I have promised him thy hand and twenty thousand crowns. We have just calculated that thy father has occasion for ten thousand: so marry my young friend, and there is an end to to all embarrassment. Thou canst divide with thy father, and I promise thee a handsome wedding gift besides. What sayest thou, girl?'

We were all confounded. Juliet turned pale, and said, without hesitating——

'My hand is already promised, and my heart is given to another—to the son of this respectable man.'

'Oh, that is another affair! then it cannot be done. I wish I had said nothing about it; it will only make thee uneasy. Where is the young man? what is he?'

'He is—he is——' exclaimed we, all at once, without daring to say more.

'He is nothing yet!' cried the intendant; 'but he is in India. Besides, the marriage is not altogether agreed upon.'

'What does all that mean?' demanded the old man, sitting down.

I replied quickly, before Mrs. Schink, and related to him, in an affecting manner, the progress of the young people's love.

He listened to me, shaking his head; and when I had done, said drily——

'I see nothing in it but a youthful folly that does not deserve to be minded. Your son may be a very good lad, but he shall not have my little neice. Without any disparagement to you, if love have its claims, duty has some too. Juliet, thou canst save thy father!'

'I have,' cried the intendant, with noble firmness, 'much to repair with respect to young Bemrode.'

'What then?'

Mr. Schink related ingenuously all he had done to get my son sent away.

'You were to blame, observed the old man: 'you should have sent him home, but not to the East Indies. My children,' proceeded he warmly, 'I am neither a misanthrope nor a barbarian! I love young people: I pity the anguish and tears of poor Juliet, and should be happy it were otherwise; but I have promised twenty thousand crowns, and cannot fail to fulfil my promise. If he do not forget thee, he must have the money as an indemnification. With that he may be able to find another wife as pretty as thou art. But it is impossible for me to assist thy father. Reflect well upon it, my girl: if thou believe that love is the grand object of life here below, however beautiful and sublime the idea appear to thee, thou art mistaken: it is the reward of virtue, but it is not virtue.'

'Is not fidelity a virtue?' said Juliet; 'and is it not God that has endued us with love?'

'Yes, certainly; but filial love is the first of all, that which lasts unto the grave, which nothing can either shake or alter, which is the purest of all sentiments,

and the only one exempt from inconstancy! as to the rest, my child, that does not regard me; act according to the impulse of thy conscience. But before thy lover can return, what if thou should learn his death!'

Juliet and my wife uttered a cry of horror.

'Or his inconstancy?' continued he. 'But do what thou shalt think proper: let thy father be ruined, and keep a promise, which is nothing at bottom but a youthful whim. I will suppose the parson's son loves thee with such another inexpressible passion, and with all the sincerity imaginable; yet thou wilt grant, at least, that thy father has loved thee much longer: these twenty years, and long before thou couldst return it, he took more care of thee than thy lover or husband could take in the course of the happiest marriage. Now, that I have told thee what I feel in my heart, choose between thy lover and thy father!'

We remained looking at each other in silence. Schink cast a supplicating look from time to time towards his daughter. His wife gave us to understand, by a variety of ways, that it was time for us to return home. My wife wept, and at last I rose up to take my hat. Juliet then cried to me——

'You too! do you abandon me? speak, in the name of heaven, speak! my Charles is also your Charles—he is your son!'

'Yes,' said I, 'he is my son and my glory!'

My wife, sobbing, pressed Juliet in her arms, but she did not dare to say—'be faithful to him.'

We returned home in deep affliction. Never until now had we felt all the worth of our son's fair friend; and were she destitute of every thing, we would have now preferred her to any other for his companion. Augusta was incensed against the old uncle. I blamed her

'Well then,' cried she, 'do let me be at least angry with our unhappy fate. Charles is lost to us: if he learn that his Juliet is wedded to another, he will never come home; and how is it possible to avert it? I do not know myself that I would have her persist in her refusal: if she could not sacrifice herself to save her father, I should not wish her to become my daughter-in-law; and if she consent to save him at that price, my Charles is lost! is it not then a distressing misfortune?'

'Good mother,' said I to her, 'do not despair yet. Wahlen and Salzman will surely do something for Charles's happiness, and Ludwig, whose favorite he is, will no longer refuse what is necessary.'

He arrived soon after; and my first words were——

'Dear friend, is not the happiness of our poor Charles worth a few thousand crowns?'

'Yes, certainly.'

I mentioned Juliet's situation to him. He began to consider how she could be preserved for Charles, and I together a little hope, when he suddenly exclaimed——

'And what if Charles have forgot her?'

'Forgot!' cried I: it is impossible!'

'And why not? the young people have not seen each other for several years, and who knows how long he may be still away? who knows if he will come back unmarried? would it be right to prevent Juliet's devotion for such an uncertainty?'

In short, Ludwig started a thousand difficulties.

'I comprehend you,' said my wife, a little nettled; 'you love Charles, but you are not his father. For my part, I am so sure of him, that if ten millions of crowns

were necessary instead of ten thousand, and we had them——'

He smiled, but said nothing.

The next morning he talked to me in private, and his representations upon the uncertainty of the future, and the fickleness of young people, gave me so much uneasiness, that he persuaded me not to interfere in it. I told it to my wife, but she would listen to nothing: the mere supposition of Charles's death or inconstancy put her in a fury.

Juliet came herself. Her paleness, and her eyes swoln with tears, announced to us that she brought no consolation. She related to us that the old uncle, notwithstanding his goodness and humanity, would not desist from his conditions, and had just declared, definitively, that he could do nothing for her father unless she would marry his friend.

I spoke very little, but my wife broke out against misers. Ludwig spoke then of the incertitudes of the future, and with so much justness, that he brought me intirely over to his way of thinking. Juliet took from her pocket the last letter she had received from Charles, and read it to us, interrupting herself repeatedly to weep. He promised her eternal constancy, and conjured her to preserve her love for him, as he considered it the only happiness of his life.

'Ah!' cried my wife, 'they who would not be moved at that letter, have a heart of stone!'

Ludwig coolly observed that Selzman had ceased to love Elizabeth.

Juliet sighed. I took her in my arms, and swore to her, with all the warmth of a young man, that she should be my daughter.

As soon as Ludwig left us, I wrote to my two sons-in-law, intreating them to do all that lay in their power for the unhappy friend of their excellent brother; and so sure was I of not failing, that I went to the castle to

tell the Schinks of it. But I found them risen to a higher tone: the intendant wavered, and his wife told me drily that Juliet would be her uncle's heiress if she married the man he proposed—'and you have too much friendship for her,' added she, with affected compassion, 'to oppose the happiness of my daughter.'

The husband was more grateful.

'What would that inheritance signify,' said he, 'if I had but the sum I am in want of? Juliet would not die of hunger; and I would rather she were married to the son of this worthy man than to any other. I have learned, at last, that good economy and order in one's affairs are the surest riches.'

Juliet inquired sadly when I was to receive an answer from my sons-in-law, and we separated rather discontented.

I had Wahlen's answer very soon. His good Elizabeth sent me her jewels, and all she had of any value; but, in other respects, her letter gave no hopes: her husband was unable to advance any sum whatever, being intirely dependant on his two uncles; and it was not hard to infer the pain this refusal must have given him.

Salzman offered more than I expected he could; but it was not near enough. It was then necessary to go to Juliet, to inform her that Charles had no more to hope but from the constancy of his loved friend.

'And what do you advise me to do?' demanded she, with the tone of despair.

I replied by a sigh, and returned home, grieved at her tears, and vexed at the spiteful looks her mother darted at me.

Some days afterwards mr. Schink came to beg us to go to his house, because his daughter desired to speak to my wife and me in presence of her parents.

'Dear friend,' said he to me on the way, 'do not forget that you are a father—do not forget that you speak to my child!'

I knew not what he would say, but followed him with anxiety. Juliet came to meet us, and said to us, with much emotion——

'You are the parents of him I love, and you shall decide my fate. I cannot—no, I cannot!' cried she, pressing her hand to her heart: 'this heart is his, and I must have your command to tear it from him. Say, must it be? my father does not insist upon it, but his sadness and supplicating looks!—whatever I do, I am very unhappy! save me, at least, from the torment of pronouncing my misfortune myself! you must determine what I am to do."

I knew not what to reply. I approached the window; the weather was dark and cloudy. On viewing the country, I fancied my son at a distance, returning deprived of all his hopes of happiness, to find his Juliet in the arms of another man. I saw him extend his arms to me, and supplicate me to preserve her for him! I lifted my eyes to heaven! at that moment, a violent gust of wind separated the clouds, and the sun shone forth in all its splendor.

'Ah!' thought I, 'the rays of eternal felicity will at last dissipate the clouds of this short and unhappy life! no, my son, thy father cannot dispense with a child fulfilling the most sacred of all duties to procure thee a few years of fleeting happiness! be miserable, since it must be so! the day will come when the rays of a glorious sun will pierce the obscurity of misfortune!'

I turned round, and saw the countenance of the interesting victim overspread with a deadly paleness; and although my heart was still at the enthusiastic pitch of self-denial, I had much difficulty in pronouncing these words—

'My daughter Elizabeth loved an estimable young man with all the tenderness of her soul; I begged her to give her hand to another, because that might have been ad-

vantageous to us. She consented; and has told me since that the moment when she thought she was sacrificing the happiness of her whole life, was, to her, the very happiest of all.'

I ceased; but as Juliet continued to look at me still, I said to her——

'Beloved of my son, I have determined!'

She cast herself at her father's feet, and cried, in an agonizing voice——

'Here is my hand; you are saved!'

There was a profound silence. Not one of us dared to interrupt, even by an exclamation, the triumph of filial piety. Schink was not able to look at his poor daughter. He raised his eyes to heaven, and seemed to be undergoing a violent internal struggle. At length he took her hand, and said to her——

'Thou art not unhappy: thou fulfillest thy duty, and it is I alone who am wretched!'

He raised her up without embracing her, and approached the old relation.

'It is only now that I feel forcibly how culpable I am for having squandered the fortune of this angel, and not united her to him she loved. Come, Juliet—come, my child!'

He took her, and clasped her to his heart.

'Whatever may happen, thou wilt be happy!—no, I will not accept of thy sacrifice: we shall be poor, but at least I will preserve thee! I would not be guilty of making thee unhappy for life; and perhaps the good young man I have removed so far from thee—perhaps he may come one day to dry up thy tears!'

The daughter was in the arms of the father, and their sentiments became every instant more grateful, pure and noble: they thought not at that moment that they were mu-

king mutual sacrifices—they were happy! at last the father yielded, and Juliet remained victorious. Her mother approached to embrace her with transport, and said to her—

'Thou hast saved my life!'

While their hearts were full of these generous sentiments, I drew near the old man, and said to him—

'Does not this sight move you, sir?'

More than I can tell you!' replied he. 'My heart is full of admiration, compassion, and pleasure! they are happy: they obey their conscience, and prove their mutual attachment. If your son himself were here, he would not be very generous if he did not imitate the greatness of soul displayed by his friend. If I could do otherwise, do you think I would hesitate?'

Upon that subject I had nothing to say. Juliet went out, and brought me the letters she had received from my son. Her hand trembled as she gave them into mine, and I received them as I would the last farewell of a person at the point of death.

'Now' cried she, in a voice scarcely audible, 'now I am ready to become the wife of your friend.'

He only shook his head, and went out instantly. I saw him stalking through the garden with a gloomy, thoughtful look, and hoped he would come to another determination; but he returned presently with a cheerful countenance. Juliet was not there when he came in. He felicitated her parents on her obedience, and talked to them about her approaching nuptials, and the presents he intended to make her, in a manner that deprived me of all hopes.

I considered it very unfeeling of him to begin such a conversation in our presence; and having no more business there told my wife, who was petrified with anguish, and had not opened her lips, to come home. I was proud

of my conduct on the occasion, and said to her on the way——

'Augusta, if this be a misfortune, the angels themselves envy us; and Charles would say as much, were he here!'

She answered only with a sigh.

CHAP. XXVI.

The century.

I WAITED this chapter amid the thundering of cannon, the ringing of bells, and the acclamations of the multitude with which the streets are filled: it is the last day of the century. Wahlen invited us to be present at the general rejoicing, and it is at his town-house that we are all assembled. All the children and grandchildren with which God has blessed me, are gone out to see the solemn festivity, and brilliant illuminations at a public place. It is eleven at night—I am old—I dread the crowd, and for these reasons have preferred remaining alone in the house.

The room in which I was left was illuminated, as well as the opposite house and all the street. On looking through the window at the thronging crowd, I was struck with the reflection that not one of those who were now rejoicing would see that day again. I beheld, in idea, all those people who were coming and going with such an air of hilarity, laid in the tomb one after another, before the two-thirds of the new century were elapsed.

'When the jubilee will come again, all those eyes will be shut—all those voices smothered—all those hearts frozen—all those animated beings fallen into dust! myself, that is not worth considering—but my children—my grandchildren too!'

My heart sunk painfully. Never did I reflect on death with so much sadness! at each anniversary, whether of birth or of the new-year, one may say, without much danger of presumption, the next year will assemble us again at the same time; but at the jubilee of a hundred years, what can the poor man of a day say! in one century, this whole generation will be no more, and other beings will hail the return of the festival! if by a happy chance, which is very rare, some one should live to see it a second time that person will in reality never have seen it: the first time it was in the clouds of infancy, and the second in the fog of extreme old age. A century is too long a space for proud human nature, which yet aspires to eternity!

Each burst of laughter, each exclamation of joy I heard in the street, pierced my very soul.

'Alas!' cried I, 'if this day do not remind man of his fragility, nothing can!'

By little and little, the laughter and vociferous joy became insupportable to me: the room, and the whole street, dazzling the eye with a profusion of light, caused a sort of shudering in me. It seemed to me as if they were so many funeral lamps, and I a shadow in an ocean of light!

'Unfortunate mortals!' exclaimed I aloud, 'yet a few instants, a few days, and all that enchants you will no longer exist for you, and all the ties that attach you here below, will be broken!'

I grew frightened at my own words, as if a voice from heaven had pronounced them. My shuddering increased, and I called an old deaf servant, the only one that staid with me in the house; and, after much difficulty, in striving to make her understand me by bawling, and making signs, asked her to bring me a light.

At first she mistook me, and thought I was talking of the light in the street.

'Ah!' cried she, with much simplicity, 'he that will see such another day, will be very fortunate!'

The light she brought me was a little lamp, in which there were only a few drops of oil left. I took it, and retired to a small room at the back of the house. I no longer heard the same tumultuous din. The silence of death reigned around me, and it seemed to me as if I had descended into my tomb; yet I found myself better. I leaned my head upon my hand, and continued to reflect upon the rapid flight of life! suddenly I heard a general discharge of artillery; the bells redoubled their clanging, and the sound of trumpets and cymbals was heard on all sides. It was midnight—it was the past century expiring, and the new one just born. I fancied I heard the crash of the world falling into ruins, and the trumpet of the last judgment! those bells sounded in my ear like the funeral convoy of all human kind! never had I been more melancholy; the faint light of my little lamp, ready to expire, was so sad, and perfectly accordant with my feelings, that I exclaimed—

'Are we not all like this glimmering lamp, which casts a doubtful, feeble light! gracious divinity! why must man receive the gift of life only on condition of losing it so soon!'

I reviewed mine, as if I had been before the throne of the eternal.

'And yet,' cried I, 'laying my hand upon my journal, of which I had read a good deal to my children on the preceding days, and to which they had listened with much pleasure, 'behold the proof of the happiness I have enjoyed, and I, ungrateful that I am, complain!'

Friend Ludwig had predicted, a couple of years ago that, I should have employment for a year or two with my book; so I resolved to write the conclusion of it immediately, which I now do by the light of the last drop of oil

in my lungs, and to the pealing sound of bells, and a *Te Deum*, which thousand of men are singing with fervor.

My gaiety is returned, my gloomy thoughts are dissipated, like a thick cloud dispelled by the south-wind, and I can at present rejoice, and cry with the multitude—*happiness to the new century!* ah, yes! *peace* and *happiness* to this generation, and those which are to succeed it! I have still some delightful moments to recollect, and will return, with my readers, to the nuptials of *Juliet*.

CHAP. XXVII.

Fourth wedding and conclusion.

The old gentleman, quite proud and pleased at having so well succeeded, set off to bear the good tidings to his young friend; promising to announce the moment of his return to conclude it, which would, he said, be speedily.

Poor Juliet dreaded it excessively and desired, as the sole condition to her consent, that her uncle alone should undertake to arrange every thing, and that her destined husband should not write to her.—'I will fulfil all my duties,' said she, 'I have returned Charles' letters and will not write a single word to him as long as I live; but to write at present to another, and receive letters from him is impossible! what could I say to him? I can be silent, and while I lock up every thing in my heart, endeavor to cure it; but I cannot be guilty of a lie!'

Her old uncle promised she should hear no more of it till the celebration, which was retarded on various accounts. At last, in about three months, the old uncle returned, and alone. Affairs relative to his employment had still hindered the bridegroom from accompanying him, but he was not to delay coming much longer, and the wedding-day was accordingly fixed upon.

Juliet intreated me so earnestly to bless her marriage, that I could not refuse her, in spite of all the agony of heart it should cause me. I went rarely to the castle, for the poor girl's sorrow was too painful for me to witness.

The day before the wedding, while we were all in expectation of seeing the bridegroom arrive, the uncle received a letter, acquainting him that he should not come till next day, at a certain hour, when he would be accompanied by his family.

How agreeable this short respite was to poor Juliet!

'When I shall have vowed at the foot of the altar,' said she to me, 'to love and obey, God will surely give me strength to hide what it costs me!'

Next day after dinner, I went to the castle. Augusta was invited likewise, but I could not prevail upon her to be present at a ceremony that decided the misfortune of her Charles; and so I went alone. I found Juliet in her bridal dress, with a wreath of flowers upon her head, and striving to keep up her resolution as well as she could. The old uncle had that morning given the ten thousand crowns, and the moment Juliet put them into her father's hands was not without consolation to her heart.

Suddenly the intendant looked through the window, and cried out—'here they are coming!'

I looked out too, and saw three coaches following each other: it was doubtless the bridegroom's family. He himself alighted from the first, and appeared to me to be

young and well made. He was dressed very elegantly, but I could not see his face, as he turned his back to the window, to help an old lady out of the coach, as I thought, for Juliet did not give me time to look. She approached me trembling, and said with anguish——

'This is the moment! oh, support me in this dreadful crisis!'

The old uncle smiled, and sat gravely down upon an easy chair. The door opened: but, good God! how depict our astonishment! how express what we felt! the young man—the bridegroom—was my Charles! it was himself! he entered, and precipitated himself, with the rapidity of lightning, at my feet and Juliet's, who was beside me, crying—'oh my father! oh my well beloved!' and was in a moment entwined in our arms.

My wife, my children, and sons came in, uttering cries of joy. Augusta, bursting into tears, embraced her Charles and his Juliet with the wildest rapture.

Friend Ludwig also came, and embraced me with a vivacity that convinced me it was he who planned the whole. He told me that it had cost him a vast deal of trouble to bring it to bear.

'I wanted,' said he, with a triumphant air, 'to put Charles's mistress to the trial, in order to see if she were worthy of him, and she has well sustained the ordeal.'

I shook my head.

'When will you leave off those trials?' said I to him. 'Is your pleasure equal to the torments you have made us suffer?'

'Is not my pleasure and your own doubled?' cried he. 'As for me, I cannot deny myself the pleasure of contemplating the triumph of virtue; and surely that of a heart which sacrifices itself to duty, is the most divine imaginable!'

At length we came to the recital. Charles had got a furlough as lieutenant, and brought home a pretty fortune. Ludwig knew the time he was to return to Eu-

rope within a few months, and enjoined him not to mention it to us, promising him, on that condition, the hand of his Juliet the moment of his arrival. But being desirous of putting her to the proof, he went to concert measures with the old uncle, and then recommended us to make application to him. The other, who loved his little niece, complied with every thing Ludwig desired, played his part as we have seen, and rejoiced equally in the unravelling of the plot. Our happiness cannot be expressed, and I shall not therefore attempt it. May my readers comprehend it!

When I had sanctified the marriage of my son, Ludwig embraced him, and said——

'Now, my dear lad, put by thy uniform and sword: let us settle in our own country, and turn farmers. It is with thee I mean to end my days.'

We were happy, and we are so still. I shall not attempt describing a life to the reader, which was every thing to us, and might be but of little consequence to him: we have lived in uninterrupted tranquillity in the midst of our children.

When they were all come in from seeing the solemnities of rejoicing, I read them the conclusion of my book. Charles and Juliet thought I had passed too hastily over the happiest day of their life.

'But no,' cried she, pressing her husband to her bosom, 'those which have succeeded have been much happier.'

When I was about to fold up the manuscript, Lolotte cried——

'But the reader will not know that I am two years older than at the commencement of the book, and that you and grandmamma are not displeased now when I sometimes scribble on a sheet of post paper.'

'Well then, Lolotte,' replied I, 'he shall know it, and he shall likewise know that what could not be done

in the last century, may take place in this, provided thy cousin continue to be a good lad, and apply himself properly to his studies.'

'Ah, there is no doubt but he will!' cried she, clapping her hands. 'He loves me still better than all those you mentioned in the book loved each other.'

'May God render thee and all of us happy, my Lolotte!' cried I; 'and grant every young girl the pure, ardent love of a deserving man, in recompense of her innocence and virtues!'

END OF THE VILLAGE PASTOR.

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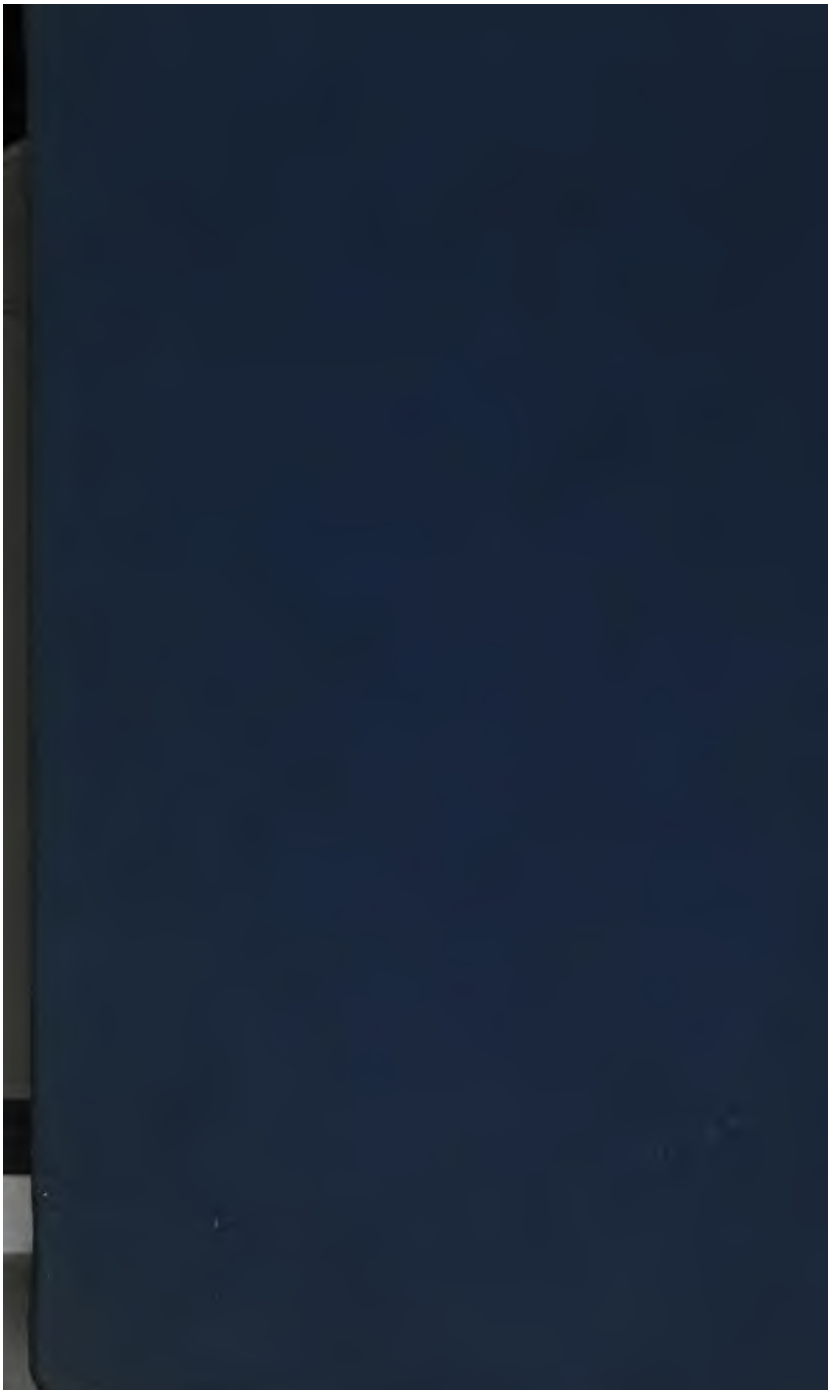
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